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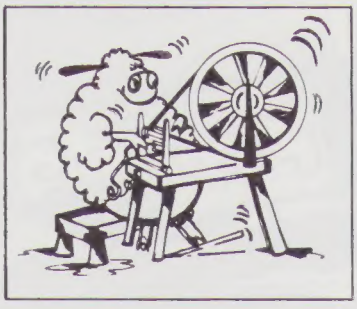

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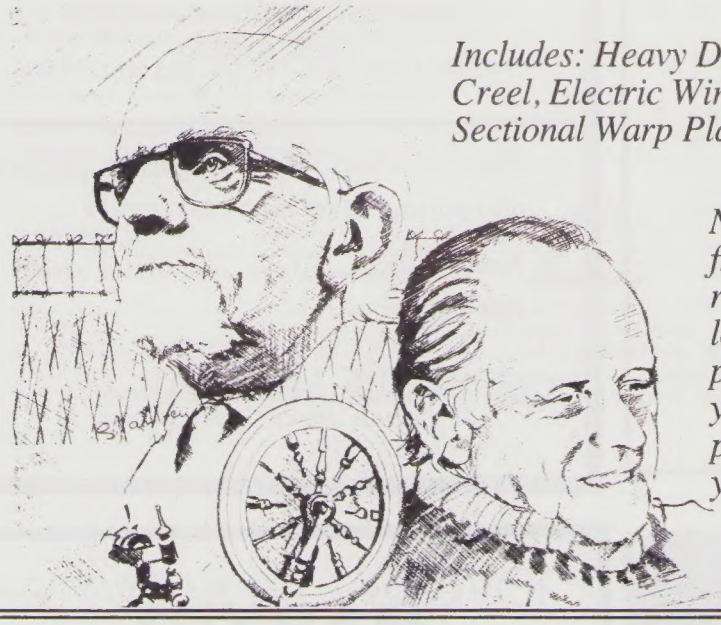

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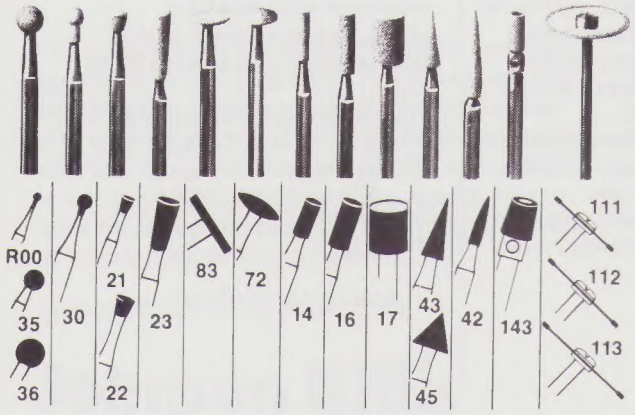

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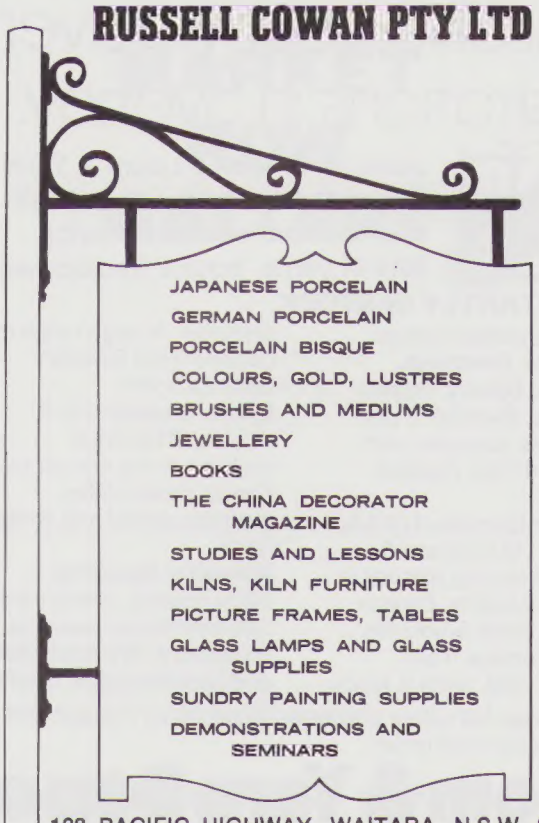

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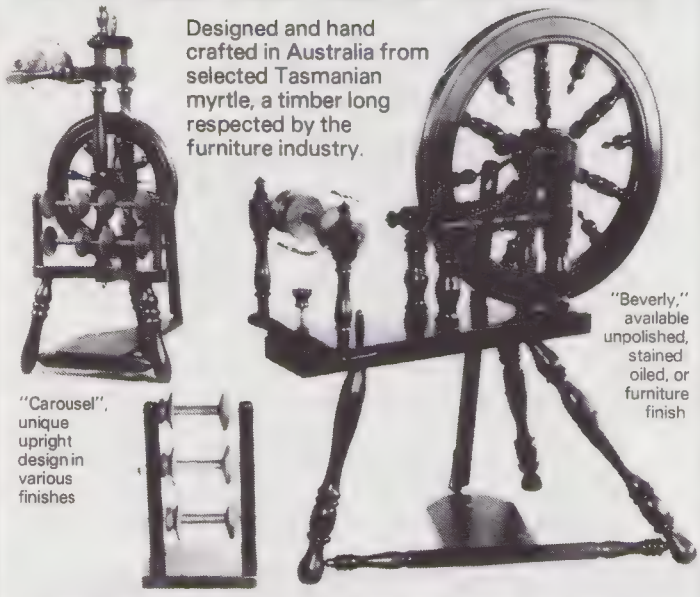

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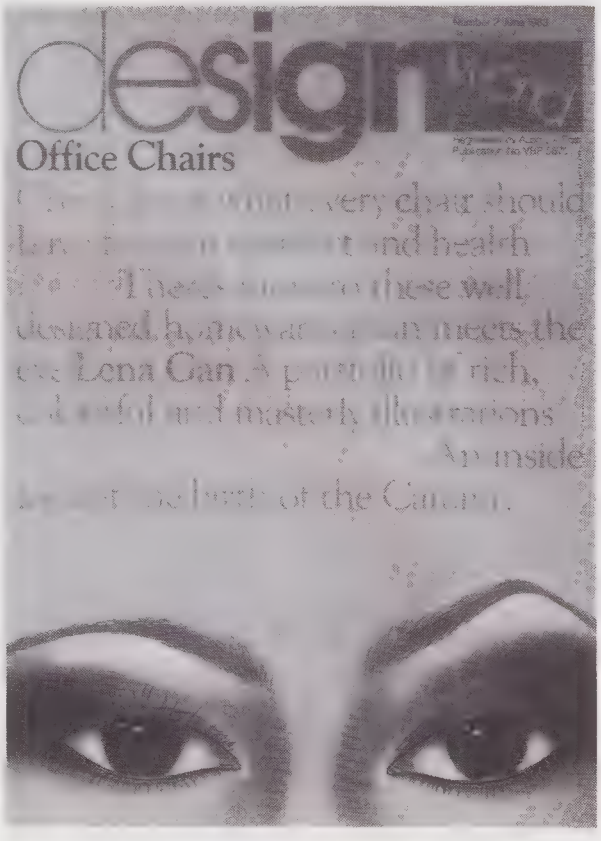

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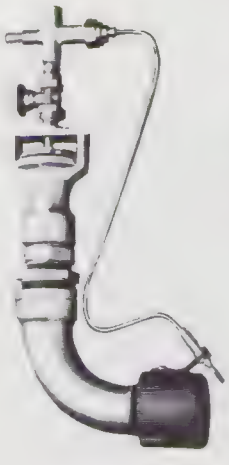

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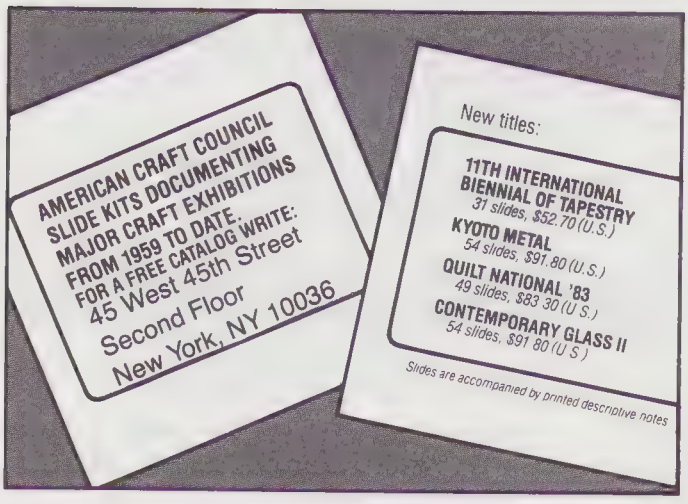

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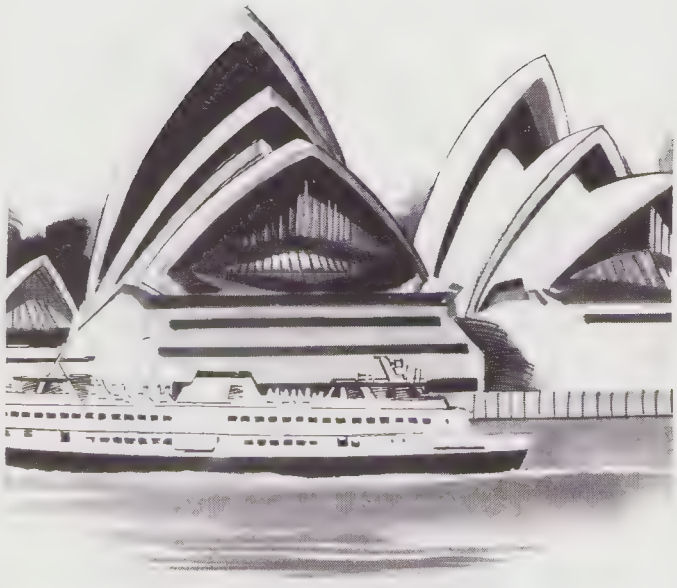

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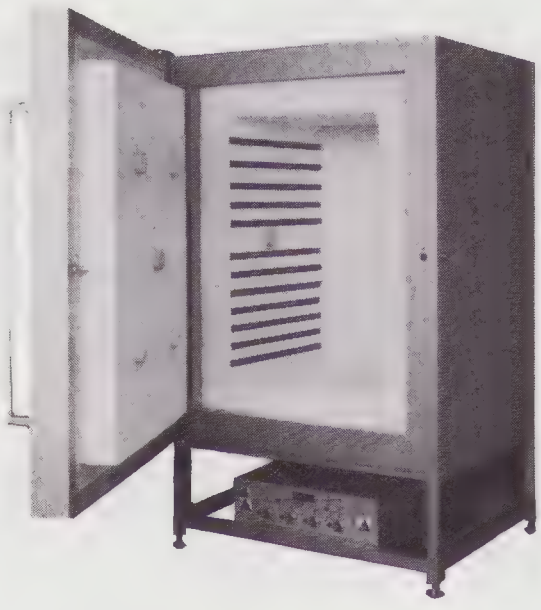

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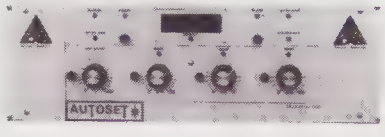

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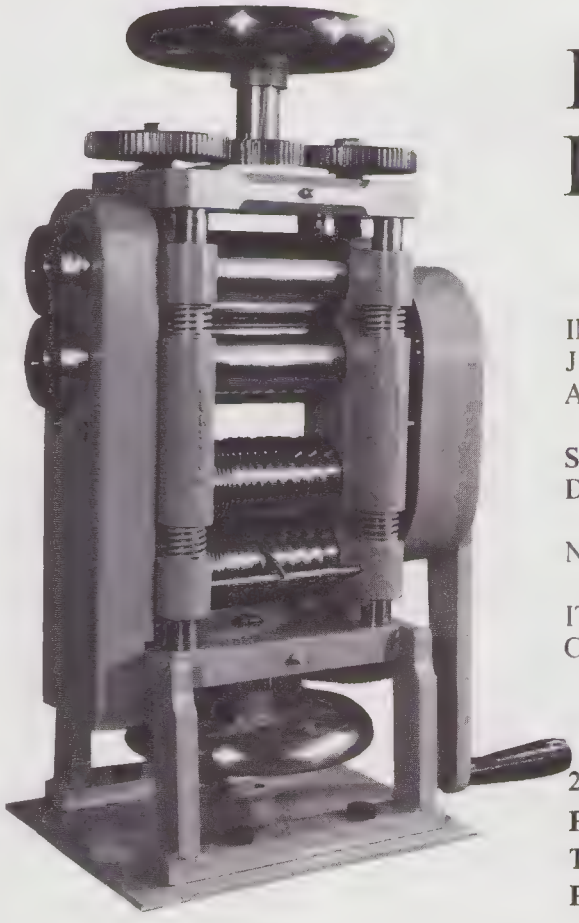

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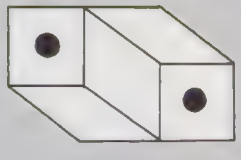

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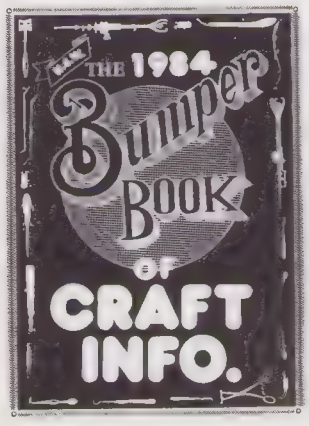

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LETTERS

To the Editor

Last Christmas my wife took out a gift subscription for me, of your magazine. I subsequently received the summer 83/84 edition, but have since received no further copies. I notice that the local library is still displaying this edition as the 'current copy', so am aware mine is not an isolated case.

I enjoy your magazine immensely, and have been watching the mail-box with eager anticipation for the last few months — to no avail. So what's the story, please?

Joe Cook
Fremantle, W.A. 6160
(P.S. — My wife may have called me Robert Cook.)

To the Editor

What is happening to your publication? I have heard nothing from your quarter of Australia since receiving the Summer 1984 edition.

I also note that the Yearbook has not appeared to date. Is my timing out? Are there problems your end, or is Australia Post letting us all down?

Help! I miss it. I need you, Craft Australia. Life is lonely without your stimulating presence.

Ms. P.A. Grigg
O'Sullivan's Beach, N.T.

The two letters printed above are just a sample of the blizzard of mail that fell on the offices of the Crafts Council. Your ***Craft Australia*** 84/1 sat for weeks on the Sydney docks, unloved and unloaded. The magazine was caught in a waterfront labour dispute of impenetrable complexity. One of our Customs Agents told us he had been in the business for seventeen years and the dispute surpassed his understanding! Further, he didn't even care any more! While our morale didn't collapse, we were as glum about the hold-up as you were. We wish to apologise to all our loyal readers who waited so long for their magazines.

The Staff of *Craft Australia*

To the Editor

Affirmative Action for Women in the Visual Arts is a broad based organisation working in the visual arts.

We are writing to draw your attention to the implications of recent State and Federal government initiatives concerning equal employment opportunities for women.

In the visual arts women and women's work are consistently under-represented, in exhibitions, funding, teaching positions and scholarships. The A.A.W.V.A. regards these aspects of the visual arts as employment issues.

Similarly, critical commentaries and reviews contribute to an individual artist's employment prospects. There is a clear need for at least fifty percent coverage of women's work.

To this end, we recommend an arts editorial policy consistent with the implications of the Equal Opportunity in Public Employment legislation.

As part of our future activity, the A.A.W.V.A. intends to encourage and monitor media response to women artists and their work. Please find enclosed a copy of the A.A.W.V.A. working paper on women in the visual arts. We would be interested in your response to the aims and objectives expressed, both in this letter and in the policy document.

Catriona Moore
for the A.A.W.V.A.
P.O. Box A 509
Sydney South 2000.

To the Editor

Thank you for the copy of ***Craft Australia*** Autumn 1984/1. I would like to draw your attention to page 64 which gives an incorrect description of a work by one of my students. The work captioned Enid Rich is by Jane Petty, Mitchell College of Advanced Education, entitled 'Devil Head Magic', knitted wool and flax.

Shirley Troy
Lecturer in Visual Arts
School of Communication and Liberal Studies
Mitchell College of Advanced Education
BATHURST. NSW. 2795.

To the Editor:

My wife recently bought a copy of Craft Australia, to which she wishes to subscribe. On thumbing through it, I found it a very good magazine. Being a Lithographic Printer by trade, I was disappointed that this journal was printed by Dai Nippon in either Singapore, Hong Kong or Japan.

Being a craft magazine, I would have thought that the magazine would have been printed in Australia by craftsmen. I consider myself to be a craftsman of my trade and I am again offended by a magazine which claims to be Australian. There are many fine printing houses in Australia which could produce this journal, and possibly of better quality. Particularly after having a close look at the printing, cyan ink spots on pages 20, 29 and 32.

I hope that maybe something can be done to rectify the situation.

(Name Supplied)
West Ryde 2114

We are often asked why Craft Australia is printed overseas. The answer is financial. We have repeatedly sought bids from local printers and have not been able to get an acceptable price. If the magazine were printed in Australia for the same cost, you would be holding in your hand a much smaller magazine, filled with black and white photographs. Regarding quality, we believe our readers are satisfied. We certainly are.

Craft Australia

About the Crafts Council

The Crafts Council of Australia is composed of elected craftsmen representatives of the eight State Crafts Councils in Australia. The Executive of the Crafts Council of Australia consists of 17 of the elected representatives, two from each State and the President,

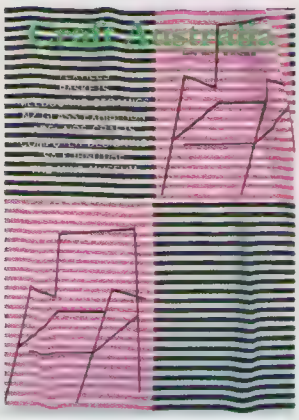
The Crafts Council is a non-Governmental body. It was established in 1971. It is a Company Limited by Guarantee and incorporated in the State of New South Wales.

The Crafts Council represents Australia on the World Crafts Council and the individual members of Australian Crafts Councils are thereby automatically members of the World Crafts Council.

The Crafts Council of Australia receives annual funding from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council, a statutory body of the Commonwealth Government. The services of the Crafts Council are available to anyone, although membership of its Executive is only possible through the State Crafts Councils.

The aims of the Crafts Council

- **To represent craftsmen** on a national basis by means of a thorough communication network of the Crafts Councils in the States and Territories.
- **To discover and interpret** craftsmen's needs and wishes to Government, funding, educational and other bodies so that those needs may more effectively be acted upon.
- **To press, where necessary, for changes** in legislation or any other changes which can bring about a happier and more productive climate for craftsmen.
- **To arrange**, in collaboration with the State Crafts Councils, exhibitions, discussions, lectures, workshops and other activities designed to instruct or stimulate craftsmen and the general public
- **To act as a focal point** for the gathering and dissemination of information on the crafts in Australia and overseas.
- **To publish** books, periodicals and leaflets and produce films and slide kits.
- **Through publications** and other means, to help Australian craftsmen have their work known and to introduce overseas work and ideas into Australia.
- **To promote** crafts, arts and design in Australia and encourage high standards of workmanship to be established and maintained.
- **To promote and encourage** the education of craftsmen and designers and to ensure adequate training facilities are provided.
- **To maintain close liaison** with the Boards of the Australia Council and in particular the Crafts Board.
- **To represent Australia** on the World Crafts Council and maintain close liaison with UNESCO through the National Commission.



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Jan McKay. March Stripe with Chair. Photo Adrian Hall.

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With this issue of ***Craft Australia***, we have developed a new look inside the magazine. We have carefully considered ways to show more craft and to display it more effectively. We hope you agree we have achieved this goal.

As you leaf through the magazine, you will find an expanded Galleries and Exhibitors section, including colour pages. ***Craft Australia*** needs more contributions from exhibiting artists and galleries to keep this section jammed with new work. Travellers interstate will also notice our new Crafts Council Calendar, designed to let crafts enthusiasts know what's going on elsewhere.

The cartoons of Leigh Hobbs will begin appearing in this issue. We have arranged with Leigh to develop a series of adventures in the next few magazines. Let us know what you think of this Melbourne artist's work.

As another first, the Sturt Workshops have arranged to have a catalogue published in the magazine along with an order form. Other craftspeople may want to note this innovative marketing step.

As for the contents of the Spring issue, there is something for everyone. The feature on Miss Marjorie Ridley's baskets demonstrates it is possible to make a living from hand-made objects and maintain one's aesthetic integrity. This is further reinforced by the S.A. furniture studio Constantia and the Queensland potters Bierman and Vaschalde. This should be heartening to young artists like Ken Bartlett and new studios like Social Fabric also featured in this issue. *Bon Voyage* to these young artists.

In the rear of the magazine, we have pulled together a Craft News section with some stories you won't find elsewhere. For example, what about the Commonwealth Gifts Program that supplies gifts for foreign dignitaries? Who administers this program and what do they purchase? In this news section, we hope to have a look at the new Parliament House and some of the craft commissions for it. So far, the administrators have been unwilling to speak to ***Craft Australia***.

Our Summer issue is coming together and we will be looking at the unusual craft of marbling paper, the work of Klaus Moje from the Canberra School of Art and a surprise feature on an unusual Australian summertime artifact.

In the future, craft writers and would-be writers are invited to contribute articles to ***Craft Australia***. If you have an idea or project you wish to explore, please contact the editor. There is a lot of work out there and we are anxious to learn of it.

Michael Bogle

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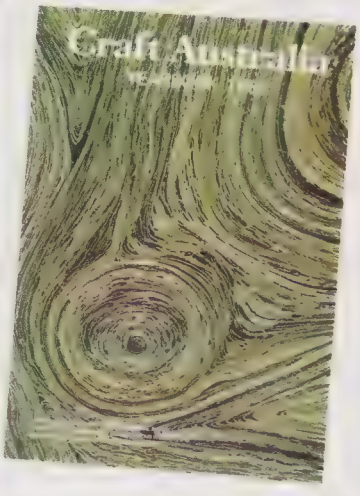

The first analytical overview of trends and developments of the contemporary crafts movement in Australia.

184 pages with over 390 photographs in colour and B/W

Can you think of a better Christmas gift for friends overseas?

The grass basketry of Miss Marjorie Ridley

Nalda Searles

ROMULA ROSEA — commonly known as guildford grass in Western Australia and onion grass in the Eastern States is a native of Southern Africa. It is now spread over much of the world. It is a winter grass, flowering in the springtime, to produce a small capsule filled with sweet and juicy seeds that schoolchildren refer to as puddings. Others know *Romula rosea* for the hard work it takes to eradicate it from lawns. Left unmolested, particularly along waterways it grows thick and luxuriant, falling over as it gets longer and heavier. Its length of maturity varies from two to one hundred centimetres.

Miss Marjorie Ridley of West Australia has made baskets from this grass for more than fifty years. Through her desire to find a self supporting lifestyle and expressing her artistic vision, this 86 year-old woman has achieved a consistent level of craftsmanship that continues in her ninth decade.

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1. Lidded basket with quongdong, gumnuts and plaited leaves. 13.5 x 245mms.

2. Knitting needle container. 150 x 150mms.

3. Flask basket with plaited handles. 380 x 110mms.

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She was introduced to basketry by Joan Heath in the 1930s. Miss Heath had lived on Flinders Island in the Tasman Straits with her family and had been making baskets with local materials she found there. When the Heath family moved to West Australia, guildford grass became a substitute material.

Miss Ridley was impressed with Miss Heath's craft and requested her friend to teach her, thus her basketmaking commenced.

As her skills developed she explored the potential of colour, a major factor in her creative life. The Blind School in Mount Lawley dyed fibre and sent samples of her dried grass to their dye supplier. Various dyes were tried and soon came back an analysis of the grass stating the dyes and processes that would be effective on it. Then came the freedom of colour. Bright reds, yellows, greens, violets, oranges, browns and blacks gleaming with the bright sheen of guildford grass.

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4. Bottle basket with removable upper section. 420 x 105mms.

5. Knitting wool basket with plaited handle and tuart seed caps. 240 x 130mms.

6. Lidded basket. Trooper W.B. Meo, Rehabilitation Ward, Perth Hospital, 1939-45. (Australian War Memorial 6682).

7. Trooper W.B. Meo.

8. Plaited bag with hakea nuts and plaited leaf decoration. 370 x 340mms.

9. Plaited purse with hakea nuts buttons. 290 x 190mms.

A variety of baskets, trays, wallets, bags, belts, mats and brushes were made and the grass used in several distinct techniques. Coiling, plaiting, spinning, weaving as well as brushware were also tried.

With the advent of the 1939-45 war, supplies of imported fibres for plasterboard, upholstery stuffing, ropes and strings were cut off so an alternative was necessary. Because of her experience with local grass, Miss Ridley was approached by the State Government on its use. When the strength and durability was tested, it was found adequate. At this time an active campaign to eradicate guildford grass from West Australia was underway, so the idea of encouraging its growth met with opposition. Legislation agreeing to the use of it was blocked and the industry never established.

During the war, the Red Cross invited her to teach this form of basketry to their workers at the Edward Millen Rehabilitation Home for Servicemen. The workers gathered their own grasses, the Red Cross miraculously produced well made dyeing vats and the project was under way. Several baskets made by a serviceman at the Red Cross centre are now in the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

At the end of the war Miss Ridley moved from Perth southwards to the coast at Australind where she built a house barely a stone's throw from the beach. Here she continued with her basketry, now well established.

The grass was harvested in a hectic four week period in the spring before it flowered. The days had to be fine and the grass dry. The grass grew longest in the sheltered riverbanks and creekbeds around Cannington, Darlington and Pinjarra. All had pockets worthy of harvest. A swathe of grass was drawn towards the knee then a sharp curved knife is swept across the base of the hank slashing it at ground level. Sufficient hanks made up a tied bundle. Finally the grass was loaded into the car, taken home and placed on drying racks. Care was taken in the handling of the grass to prevent tangling. They were turned regularly and often till dry and stiff.

10. Lidded basket with quongdong, marri nut and plaited leaf decoration. 115 x 220mms.

11. Lidded basket with quongdong and gumnut decoration. 130 x 260mms. Collection Mrs. B. Tiggott.

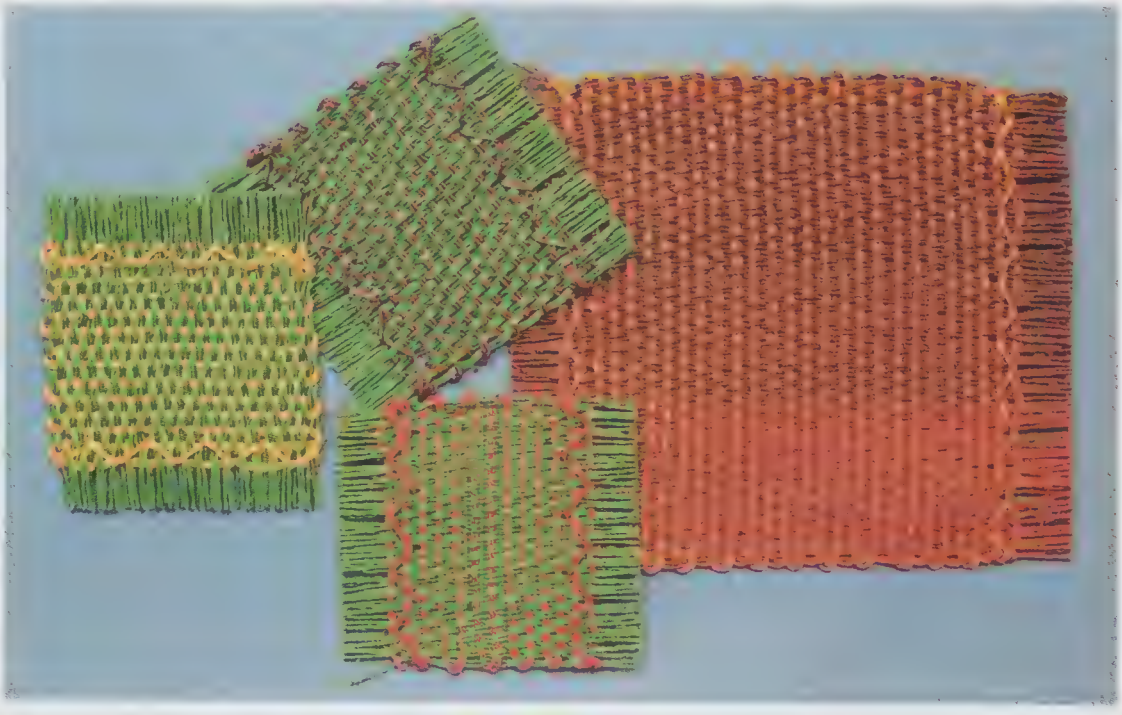
12. Open basket with plaited leaf and tuart seed decoration.

13. Woven mats. 140 x 120mms and 80 x 70mms.

14. *Jardiniere* with plaited leaf and hakea nut decoration. 170 x 240mms.

15. Assorted baskets and tray. Tray 190 x 300mms, lidded baskets 65 x 105mms, basket with handle 120 x 160mms. Open basket 30 x 90mms.

16. Lidded basket with quongdong button 110 x 220mms.

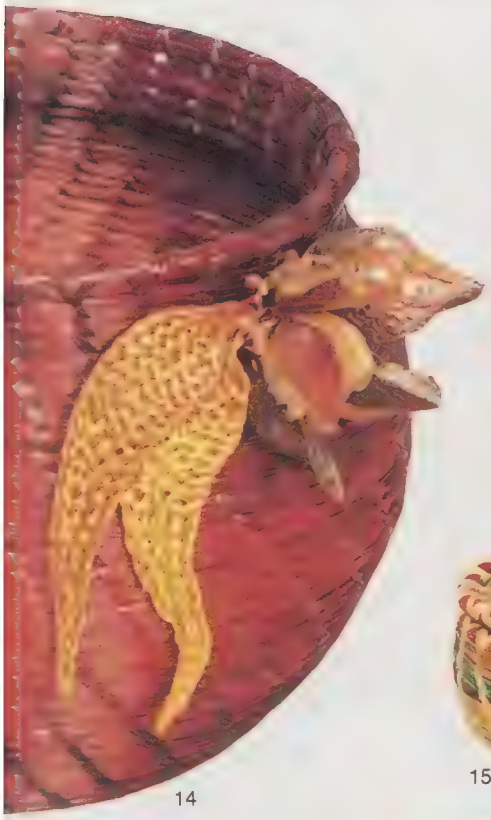


Grass to remain natural or straw colour is bleached in the sun and also requires regular turning. For dyeing, grass is steeped in boiling water for one to two hours, then placed into vats of dye and boiled for a given period. Miss Ridley has a large chest of drawers full of prepared grass, some collected more than thirty years ago. It is in excellent condition and the colours lively and rich.

All of Miss Ridley's coiled objects are worked onto a plywood base. She uses a partitioned working tray to contain the grasses for the basket in progress. A bundle of the grass is stitched around the plywood base with the stitching passing through holes approximately a centimetre from the edge of the base and the same distance apart. As that bundle is used, more grass is fed into it. The ends are concealed within the bundle. Natural and coloured raffia is used to stitch the coils together and the ends of that are likewise concealed. The stitching creates a curvilinear effect and is quite open exposing the grass core. Shaping the basket is achieved by placing the working bundle either more towards the inner or outer edge of the previous row. For example the perfectly coiled walls of her globular shapes are worked with an alternating outer then inner placement of the coils. On completion, the basket is given a coat of clear varnish.

Many of the grass objects are decorated with sprigs of Australiana. Quongdongs, jarrah, marri, hakea and tuart nuts surrounded by beautifully plaited leaves are polished and stitched to form small arrangements on lids and basket walls.

Flask and bottle baskets have straight sides and plaited handles. Knitting baskets have plaited handles. Lidded baskets vary from large sewing basket size to small multicoloured containers. There are open baskets, *jardinieres*, knitting needle baskets and oval and circular trays.



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17. Plaited clothes brush lashed with raffia. 95mms.

18. Plaited clothes brushes lashed with raffia. 135 and 95mms.

19. Cobweb broom with bamboo handle. (head) 200 × 100mms.

20. Hearth brush with cape lilac handle. 500 × 100mms.

Plaiting using a five, seven or nine strand braid with each strand produces handles, belts and bags. There is a red flat circular bag consisting of a continuous row of braiding stitched and lined with satin which has been in use for forty years and shows little sign of wear. In Miss Ridley's work area at the rear of the house, there is a case erupting with streams of brightly coloured braids.

The longest strands of grass are spun into a fine strong string on a spinning machine constructed for this purpose. The grass is spun, saturated with water, dried and saturated again and woven into handsome multicoloured wallets and mats.

Miss Ridley's talents extend beyond basketry. Her tiny clothes brushes, hearth brushes and cobweb brooms are durable and effective. She makes a clothes brush cunningly designed to fit in purse or pocket that consists of a hank of grass plaited in the centre section. The plait is then folded in half and lashed four or five centimetres from the end with raffia. The loose ends then become the bristles while the plaiting becomes the handle. Her hearth and cobweb brushes have stick handles. A thick bundle of grass is lashed around the stick and then folded back over itself and relashed forming a head and bristles.

Miss Ridley's basketry has earned international, interstate and local recognition and two pieces are in the collection of the West Australian Museum and privately owned pieces are distributed all over the world.

Her ambition has always been to create pieces of beauty that give people pleasure. Baskets that have been used for forty or more years are still beautiful, firm and functional — an inspiration for any craftsperson. They will become a legacy to her achievement.

An exhibition of baskets made by Miss Ridley will be held at the Crafts Council in Perth from 19 September to 14 October 1984. These baskets are all owned privately. She has no work for sale.

CONSTANTIA FURNITURE WORKSHOP, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Lenore Dunn

Among the growing number of craftsmen working in wood are **Constantia**, makers of fine furniture with their workshop and gallery in Port Lincoln, SA. Bernie Koker, a cabinetmaker from South Africa, Ken Martin, an Australian woodcarver and Malcolm Averill a wood finisher from England have been working together since 1971. Every piece is a synthesis of their combined skills. Their work evolved from their traditional base to an elegant contemporary style.

Although most of their work is commissioned, they do produce work for their gallery and at present, it is all 'one off'. Under discussion is a scheme for 'limited editions' which will once again take them in another direction. For commissions, all preparatory work is done on a personal level with the client. They feel this keeps them abreast of changing needs and ever important ergonomic factors in design. This is clearly illustrated in a recent commission of dining chairs for the Lukin family, whose son Dean is the Commonwealth Gold Medallist Weightlifter. They worked closely with family members taking into account that people have different dimensions and the resulting chairs have both a wonderful strength and great elegance. The seats are shaped to support thighs and buttocks taking the strain from the back. The pleasant verticals of the back of the chairs create an invisible curtain enclosing and isolating the diners for the serious business of eating, drinking and conversation. For another client, the height of a 2.7 metre Honduras mahogany table was lowered and an unusual sense of intimacy created.

Indigenous trees, plants and delicate ecology of the natural environment have influenced their designs. Bernie has discovered that the proportion ratios derived from these sources are quite different from the proportions we inherited from the classical age. Exploration of these ideas has created exciting new forms, meaning new concepts in carving and finishing. They have taken the Australian eucalypt as the theme for two current series of work. The mallee tree is

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1. Collector's Cabinet. Queensland walnut, Huon pine inlay. 1982. Photo, Knox and Associates.

2. Occasional table, *Mallee* series. Honduras mahogany, mallee burn with silver ash inlay. 1983. Photo, Knox and Associates.

3. Dining chairs. Silky oak, Queensland black bean, silver ash inlay. Kangaroo hide plaited seats. 1984. Photo, Knox and Associates.

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captured in a small occasional table of Honduras mahogany with a mallee burl inset and inlay of Queensland ash. The gracefully curving legs, the delicate understated carving and the high gloss finish, reminiscent of the sun shining on the leaves, are very evocative of this tree.

The proportions and elegance of the ghost gum have inspired the other series they are working on. Bernie's first introduction to this tree was an urban setting, when he saw it growing in its natural habitat the impact was tremendous. The Ghost Gum series expresses Bernie's initial reaction. Its tensile strength tuned to withstand the harsh environment left a vivid impression. The legs of the furniture pieces reflect the way the trunk bears the life force and strength of these trees.

As cabinetmaker, Bernie has the initial responsibility for the piece. He executes this with superb craftsmanship and meticulous detail. Dealing with a material that comes alive in the drastic environment of central heating and air conditioning requires careful joinery and general practice using the old and proven with the best the twentieth century has to offer.

The furniture is further enhanced by the subtlety of Ken's woodcarving. Carving suggesting resin dripping from the ghost gum is integrated into the overall design with considerable charm. Ken is also commissioned to produce wood sculptures from time to time and is presently carving a tuna fisherman from a solid block of Bolivian mahogany, capturing the rugged strength and grace of a man in action.

Malcolm uses great skill in determining the finish for each piece bringing forth the colour, grain and character of the individual wood. The time and care is incredible. One piece required 145 hours of finishing. For some work, Malcolm would like to work over a period of 12 months to achieve the right patina. Not many pieces require such a finish. Constantia have a total concept approach to their work which includes making the polishes and oils. Malcolm has developed unique finishes by adapting ancient recipes to produce a hardy concoction impervious to heat, fingerprints and spills. They are marketing this under their Constantia brand.

4. Dining setting. Honduras mahogany. 1983. Photo, Knox and Associates.

5. Sideboard. Honduras mahogany. 1979. Photo, Knox and Associates.

6. Cabinet-on-table detail. Silky oak, black bean, inlay silver ash. No date. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

7. Partner's desk. Honduras mahogany, Queensland black bean, South Australian blackwood. 1982. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

8. Constantia workshop. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

9. Bernie developing the profile of a chair seat. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

10. Ken carving a clock door frame. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

11. Malcolm finishing. Photo, Christopher McGeever.

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12. Display cabinet on bureau. Queensland maple, South Australian blackwood. Glass by Vaughn Taylor. 1981. Photo, Knox and Associates.

13. Chest of drawers on chest. Queensland walnut, Queensland maple, cork bead, Honduras mahogany. 1981.

Making individual pieces in solid wood requires careful hand selection of the finest timbers. They have 15 species of world class timber on hand including Honduras mahogany, Australian walnut, maple, the three main oaks, Australian blackwood, black bean, satin sycamore and Huon pine. The woods they use also offer a wide selection of special grain features such as fiddleback.

The partnership is unusual in that their work is the synthesis of combined skills and ideas rather than one person having the responsibility for the overall design and the others merely executing that design. They work closely together at all stages even though each has his own area of expertise. This approach is evident as they proceed with an idea. In the initial design stages Bernie makes the first statement and prepares the drawings.

In stage two Ken works on decoration and produces sketches for the carving and other decoration. Stage three Malcolm chooses the appropriate finish. They are always aware that furniture, apart from its aesthetic values, must also be functional. Their close interaction determines the final work.

Constantia also does restoration work. One interesting project is an 18th century French decorative ormolu cabinet set with semi-precious stones. This required a lot of research, 12 different pieces had to be replaced and carved. Malcolm has brought the wood up to an ebony-like finish using lamp black and a special wax.

The trio chose to work in Port Lincoln because of its climate. Temperatures and humidity there are near perfect for working in wood. In this they are purists, preferring not to work in an artificially created climate. Port Lincoln itself is a source of inspiration; the calms and storms of the sea, the beauty of the surrounding countryside and the rhythm of its seasons.

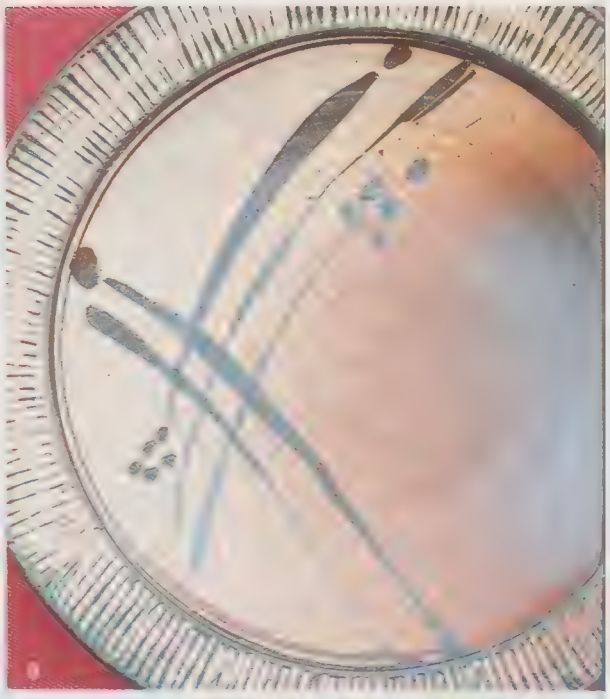
BIERMAN/ VASCHALDE THE INDIVIDUAL PARTNERSHIP

Janet De Boer

Nina Bierman was the first female potter in Queensland to qualify for a grant under the Crafts Board of the Australia Council in 1974. The money helped her prepare her first major exhibition in Brisbane which she held with her husband Jean-Jacques Vaschalde. They are well known in Queensland for their success in supporting themselves from production work, but also for a number of early innovations. Talking with them is a reminder that just a few years ago things were very different in the craft world, particularly in Queensland. There were a few other self-supporting potteries in the state ten years ago — but very few. Relinquishing a secure and well paid job was certainly a difficult decision as it remains today.

Nina was a secretary to the Dutch consul and Jean-Jacques had been a teacher in schools for the subnormal. Nina initially studied pottery with Milton Moon at the Queensland Institute of Technology. Eventually she and Jean-Jacques completed a three-year, part-time Studio Ceramics course at Coorparoo Technical College. In addition to grants they earned supplemental studio income through Jean-Jacques' work as a technical assistant in the Coorparoo course and as a tutor for the Australian Flying Art School. He

1. Nina, Vase, 45cm. Thrown with hand-built details. Dolomite matt glaze.
2. Nina Bierman, Two Vases, 22cm. Splashes of glaze, spray of metallic oxide.



3. Nina. Lidded Jar, 34cm. Dry glaze.

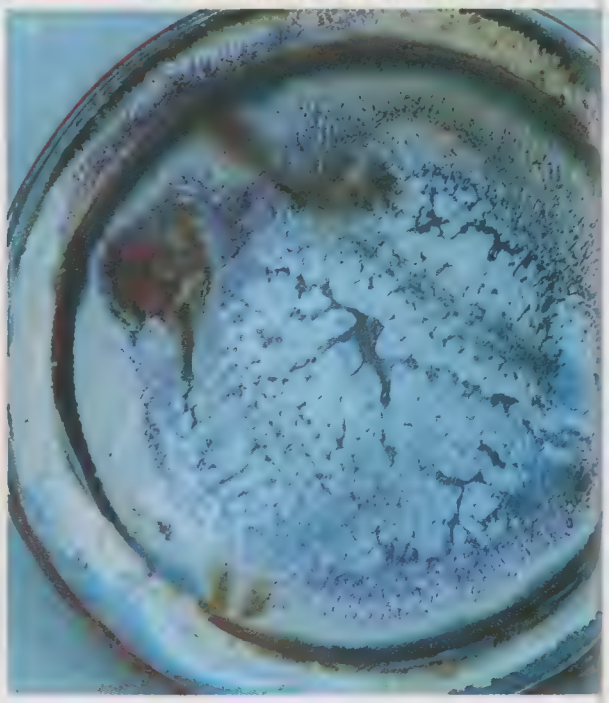
4. Jean-Jacques Vaschalde. Bottle, 55cm. Dolomite glaze.

5. Jean-Jacques. Platter, 40cm. Iron oxide brushwork over slip.

6. Jean-Jacques. Plate, 20cm. Talc glaze over iron-base glaze.

7. Nina. Blossom jars, 20cm. White matt glaze over iron glaze.

8. Jean-Jacques. Bottle, 29cm. White talc glaze over red-iron glaze.



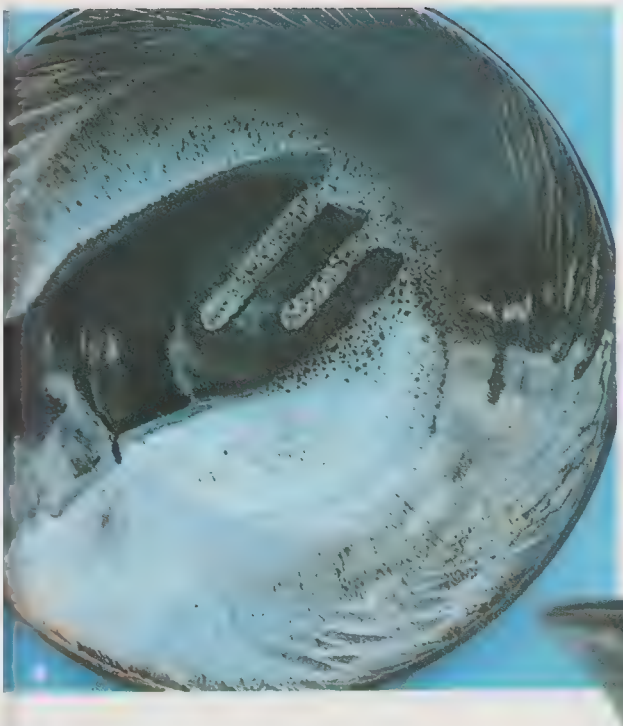
feels he can still see the influence of early glaze recipes around Queensland, which he taught through the AFAS.

In glazes, Nina and Jean-Jacques saw their work as an early departure into soft, light colours, blues and whites. They observed a strong influence on Queensland pottery from Japan and Britain and they are still concerned that unique Australian developments be recognized and supported. Worries over lead in glazes drew them from earthenware to stoneware.

At present they collaborate in the production of all domestic ware and while they share glazes, their exhibition work is not at all collaborative. Each pursues an individual approach. Nevertheless, both begin all their pieces on the wheel, though they may finish with handbuilding techniques. They feel their exhibition work arises out of reference to the functional.

Nina and Jean-Jacques were early innovators in their approach to selling. Now it is common to hear craftspeople advised not to sell on consignment. But even eight years ago the pair insisted on this approach in Brisbane. They lost potential sales too for a while. But both felt strongly that standards drop when consignment selling is practised and that it is unfair to the craftsman as well. There was sufficient demand for their pottery, even in the early days, to make this policy work. Now they have all the orders they can cope with, selling mainly to about half a dozen regular outlets in Queensland. They also work towards an annual Open House, another pace-setting idea. Their first one paid for their first kiln. Now they estimate the Open Houses provide about a quarter of their yearly income, and literally hundreds visit them.

The costs of a new house and studio led them from exhibition work to greater concentration on production ware. They produce whole dinner services, wine sets, and a variety of kitchenware. Basically, two glazes are used, both starting with a standard white glaze which receives oxide spray or decorative brushwork. Nina's knowledge of glazes is considerable and she spent a year in Amsterdam doing specialised glaze study. A common feature of her domestic ware is an indentation in the wheel-thrown roundness, with oxides used to darken and accentuate. She also enjoys very dry glazes, where the addition of fine 'grog' prevents the glaze from maturing to a sheen. She finds this more suitable for storage jars.



9. Nina. Lidded jar, 32cm. Saturated iron glaze.

10. Jean-Jacques. Plate, 18cm. Iron and cobalt brushwork over white talc glaze. Detail.

11. Nina. Family group, tallest 23cm. White talc glaze over iron glaze.

11

12 Jean-Jacques. Bowl, 27 x 7cm. Iron and cobalt brushwork over white talc glaze.

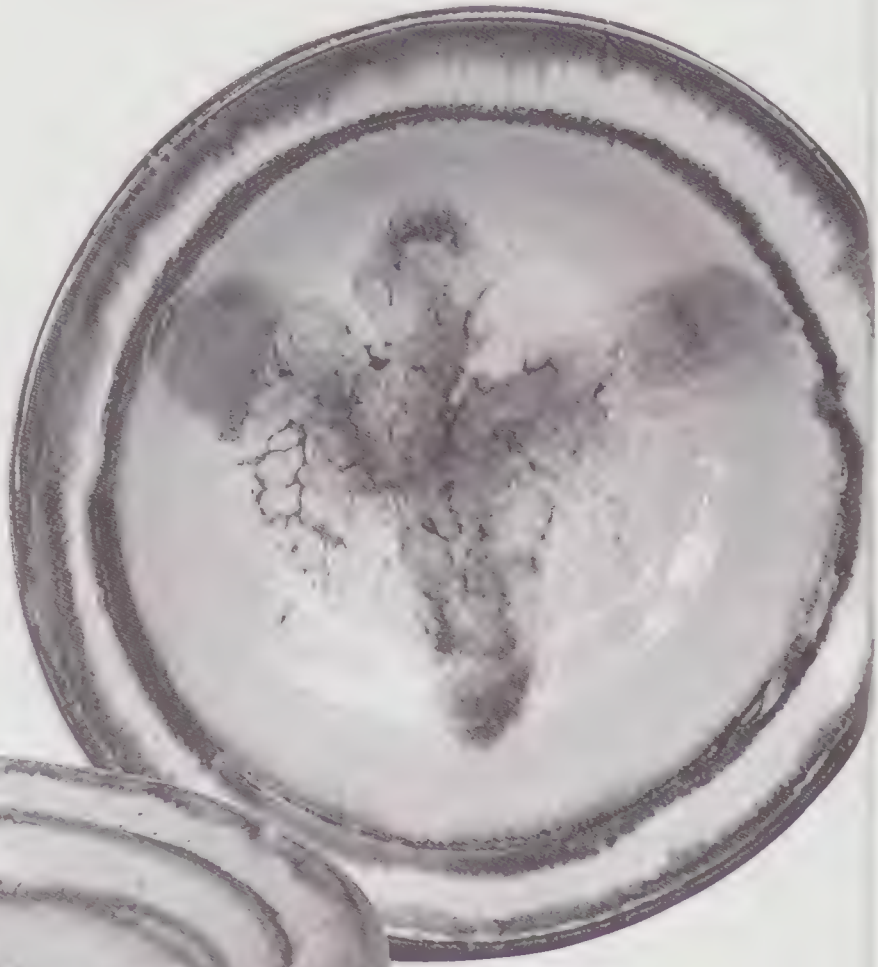
13. Nina. Lidded jar, 23cm. Dry glaze.

14. Jean-Jacques. Plates, 18cms. Iron and cobalt brushwork over white talc glaze.

Jean-Jacques is well known for his platters, which are lovely enough to hang on the wall. In past years the oxide brushwork on slip-covered platters was a favourite. At the moment he is excited about quite a different look, using crystal talc glazes. He has experimented for nearly a year and as he gains more control he is contemplating the kind of shape and size that best accommodates the developing glaze effects.

Nina enjoys large sized pieces and she will start a large wheel-thrown base that she carried through with hand building. Now that her young children are maturing, she feels eager to divert energy back into exhibition work.

The range of glaze effects she achieves can be astonishing. In two brown vases that she puts in her 'egg shape' category she has left bare clay, with splashes of glaze, for a metallic effect. But in a 'family grouping' of vases she used a saturated iron glaze underneath with crystal talc over the top involving double and even triple dipping of the pots. She comments on the flow that is evident from surveying exhibition pieces over the years. 'Keep growing', they both conclude, as the partnership expands, but never engulfs the individuality.



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Social Fabric Screen Printing Studio

Judy McMahon

SOCIAL Fabric's Workshop is washed in natural light from wraparound windows, with views you're unlikely to see as postcard panoramas.

To the left, post-war industrial landscape stretches east to Botany Bay, punctuated by the slow descent of an airliner; on the right we look down into the brick and corrugated iron vastness of the Eveleigh Locomotive and Carriage Works built more than a century ago.

1. Jan McKay. *Electric Friday*. Photo Adrian Hall.

2. Jan McKay. *March Stripe With Black Wattle*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

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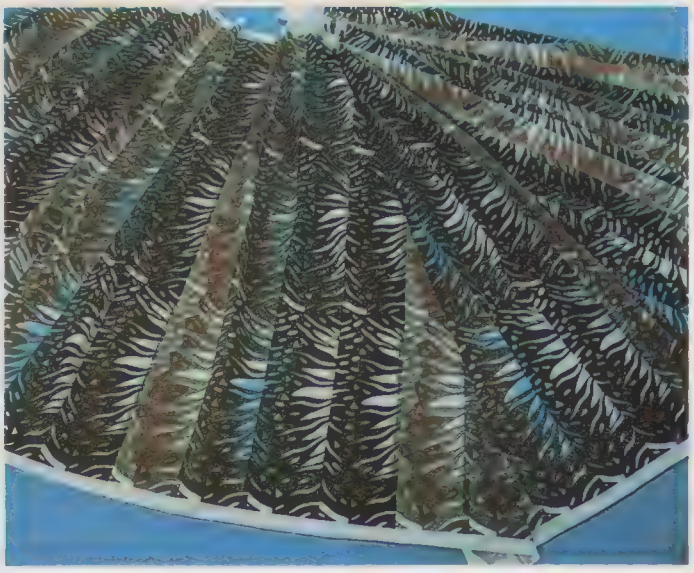

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3. Jan McKay. *March Stripe with Chair* Photo Adrian Hall.

4. Jan McKay. *Comet*. Photo Adrian Hall.

5. Jan McKay. *Comet* with Marie McMahon *Fire Fabric* sash. Photo Adrian Hall.

6. Kathy Letray. Design on Paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

7. Marie McMahon and Kathy Letray. *Pacific* (left) and *Alphabet Soup* (right). Photo Oliver Strewe.

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8. Jan McKay. *Fairlie*. Design on paper.

9. Kathy Letray. Design on paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

10. Kathy Letray. *'L' Action*. Design on paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

11. Kathy Letray. Design on paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

12. Kathy Letray. Design on paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

The point where these two views converge is an old, high-ceiling factory where three women are busy producing sample lengths of screen-printed and hand-painted fabrics from their original designs. The aspect from the third floor doorway is every bit as time-warped as the external landscapes . . . motifs for modern times worked in craft technologies from the past.

Today, the women are producing a length of a new design called 'Fire Fabric', a four-colour print on white cotton.

Jan Mackay and Marie McMahon stand at opposite sides of the 10 × 1.75 metre table, moving the screen along at regulated intervals, pouring ink and pushing the squeegee across from one to the other. Each is intent on registration guides as they work the third colour into its design areas.

'It's been like Fawlty Towers in here today', laughs Jan, 'nothing's gone quite right for this one'.

The black screen colour was a painstaking job to register. The screen for the second colour, red, had to be re-coated and re-exposed when something went awry with the emulsion.

'It could have been the activator', Marie comments, 'we're trying our new set-up here . . . ironing out first-time wrinkles, it must look very frustrating, but each time we find a problem we eliminate it'.

Across the floor in an area set up for fabric drying and screen making, Kathy Letray is applying shellac to a frame for the final 'Fire Fabric' screen. 'We have to have this, and a couple of other new designs, ready for Thursday', she says. With classes to be taught in the two days remaining plus a couple of freelance art jobs due for completion, Thursday seems uncomfortably close.

The working relationship goes back to the early Seventies when the three women were students together at the National Art School. Since those years they have enjoyed parallel careers, often collaborating on projects.

As members of the Women's Domestic Needlework Group, Kathy and Marie mounted and toured the Crafts Board-assisted *D'oyley Show* over a five year period. They also gained valued technical experience working as casual screen printers and colour mixers for 'Wilson's Wallpapers and Fabrics'.

Marie and Jan also worked together as members of the Earthworks Poster Collective over a number of years and were members of a small group of artists who designed and painted the 'Women on the Edge of Town' mural in Sydney's Domain for the 'Women and Arts Festival'. All three career paths finally converged last year through the last months of another fabric printing venture.

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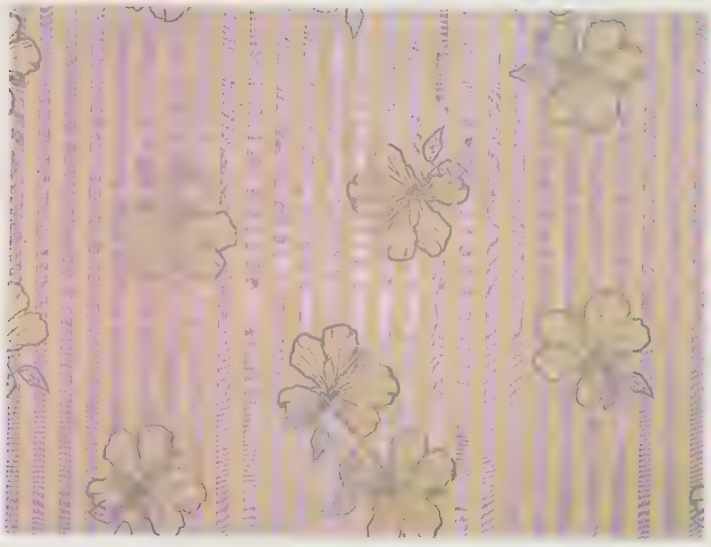

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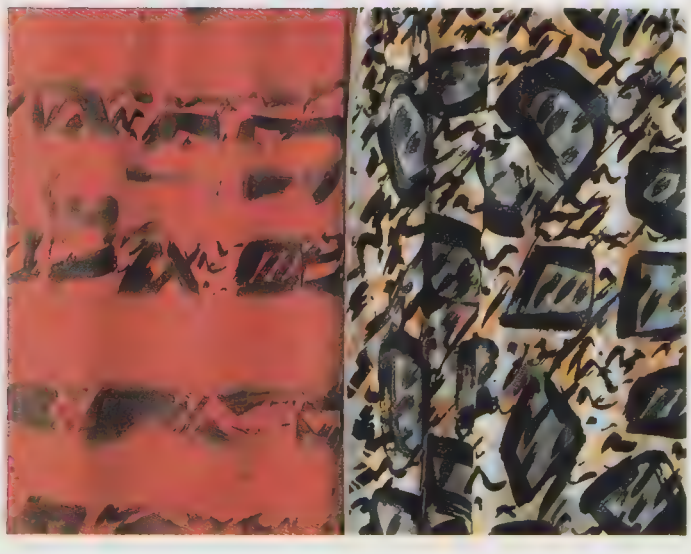


13. Jan McKay. *Fairlie* (handpainted).

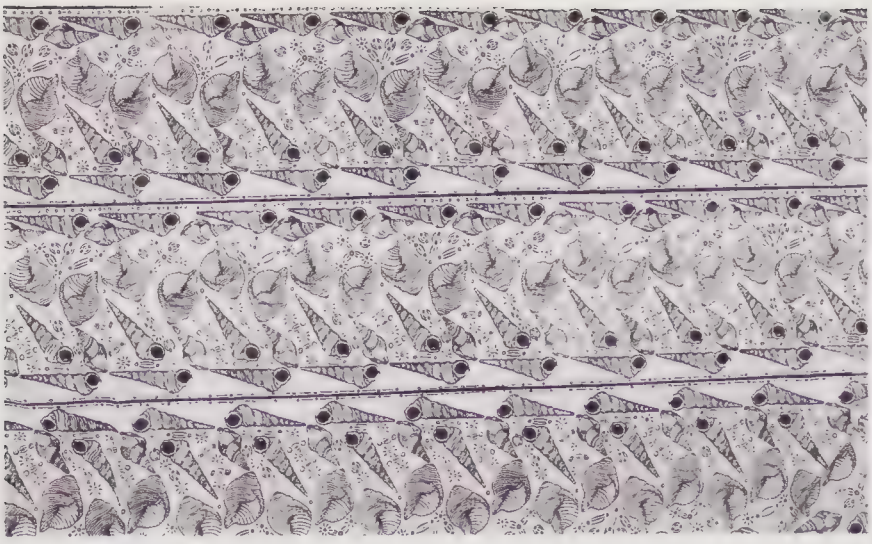
14. Marie McMahon. *Hibiscus and Stripe*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

15. Jan McKay. *Electric Friday version*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

16. Kathy Letray *'L' Action*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

17. Kathy Letray. *'L' Action*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

18. Marie McMahon *Pacific*. Photo Oliver Strewe.



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19. Marie McMahon. Febric Design. Photo Oliver Strewe.

20. Kathy Letray. Design on paper. Photo Oliver Strewe.

21. Marie McMahon and Kathy Letray. *'L' Action With Motifs*. Photo Oliver Strewe.

Their individual works at Social Fabric have included Jan's three 'Repeating Patterns' exhibitions of handpainted furniture and handprinted fabrics. Marie has completed set and costume designs for the Dance Company's production of 'Coppelia'. She has also worked with the Aboriginal co-operative, Tiwi Designs, for whom she created a t-shirt design. Social Fabric's upcoming December exhibition will be Kathy's first since the *D'oyley Show*. The demanding role of being wife and mother to a young family has kept her busy in recent years.

The $10,000 Group Studio Development Grant from the Crafts Board of Australia Council enabled the three women to set themselves up here after considerable personal effort and funds had been devoted to an earlier unviable co-operative venture. The ability of that business to provide an income to its workers was limited by unsuitable premises and equipment. Their application for assistance asked for funding to enable them to design and print their own work (both individual and collaborative designs), to provide studio training for young artists as well as facilities for visiting artists and to eventually provide self-employment for themselves.

Equipment and premises suitable for the production of up to 20 metres of fabric per day was needed to make the business self-supporting though no wages were sought in the application. The women figured on part-time teaching and freelance art jobs to fund themselves through the first twelve months. Then they hoped to be in a position to pay themselves through fabric sales.

Marie speaks of the frustrations they've experienced since receiving the grant, of budgeting for the 'hidden extras' of Fire and Damage and Workers Compensation insurance and of juggling developmental deadlines whilst earning enough to keep going. 'The grant money sets you up and gets you going, but it doesn't buy you any time' is her summing up. 'Social Fabric has material needs to take care of'. They will devote the months that remain of their initial year's grant to the production of a full sample range, the exhibition of their new works, and planning their marketing strategy.

'Our big problem is marketing', comments Jan Mackay, 'we're not certain at the moment whether we'll find our level in the general marketplace or have to create and develop a market for our work.'

'We're still so busy printing our current designs and enlarging the existing range that we haven't had much time to look at the marketplace. It's a bit of a worry to us . . . where do we start looking for instance? We need to develop our business expertise. Quickly!'

Overtures have been made to designers in the fashion industry who incorporate handprints into their collections. On the one hand, interest has been expressed in the quality of the samples, on the other, the Social Fabric designs are greatly admired, but the cost of the fabrics (around $15 per metre retail) inhibits any serious interest by the general fashion market. The solution, Marie thinks, may be in bringing a fashion person into the group.

The prospect of producing for the decorating and furnishing market appeals to them for the future. 'Not just the same old co-ordinated soft furnishings you see now . . . individual designs that can expand and change form and colour throughout an entire home or suite of offices'.

With that said, swatches of the completed 'Fire Fabric' are gathered into arrangements of single, double and full print runs in various colourways, some seem barely related until placed with the original 4-colour design. The result is spectacular.

'Perhaps the exhibition will find our market for us', says Marie.

The exhibition is booked for the Bondi Pavilion in December and will incorporate fabric lengths, some made-up garments and handpainted furniture upholstered in their fabrics. It will be the *fait accompli* of twelve months' frustrations, hopes and hard labours. It will also be the curtain-raiser on a year planned to raise Social Fabrics to a level of self-sufficiency. 'We're looking on the exhibition as being less an opening than a workshop warming party', says Kathy. The beachfront Pavilion in a Bondi summer should provide the perfect party atmosphere.

The Problem-Solving Machine
CRAFT COMPUTERS

Garry Benson

The mosaic magic of the Byzantine Empress Theodora (AD 526-547) shines in glowing beauty from the walls of the Church of St. Vitale in Ravenna, Italy. Shards of glass, marble and clay are interspersed to produce an image that is coarse when looked at closely. At a distance it coalesces to form a vibrant image. It is an icon for its worshippers.

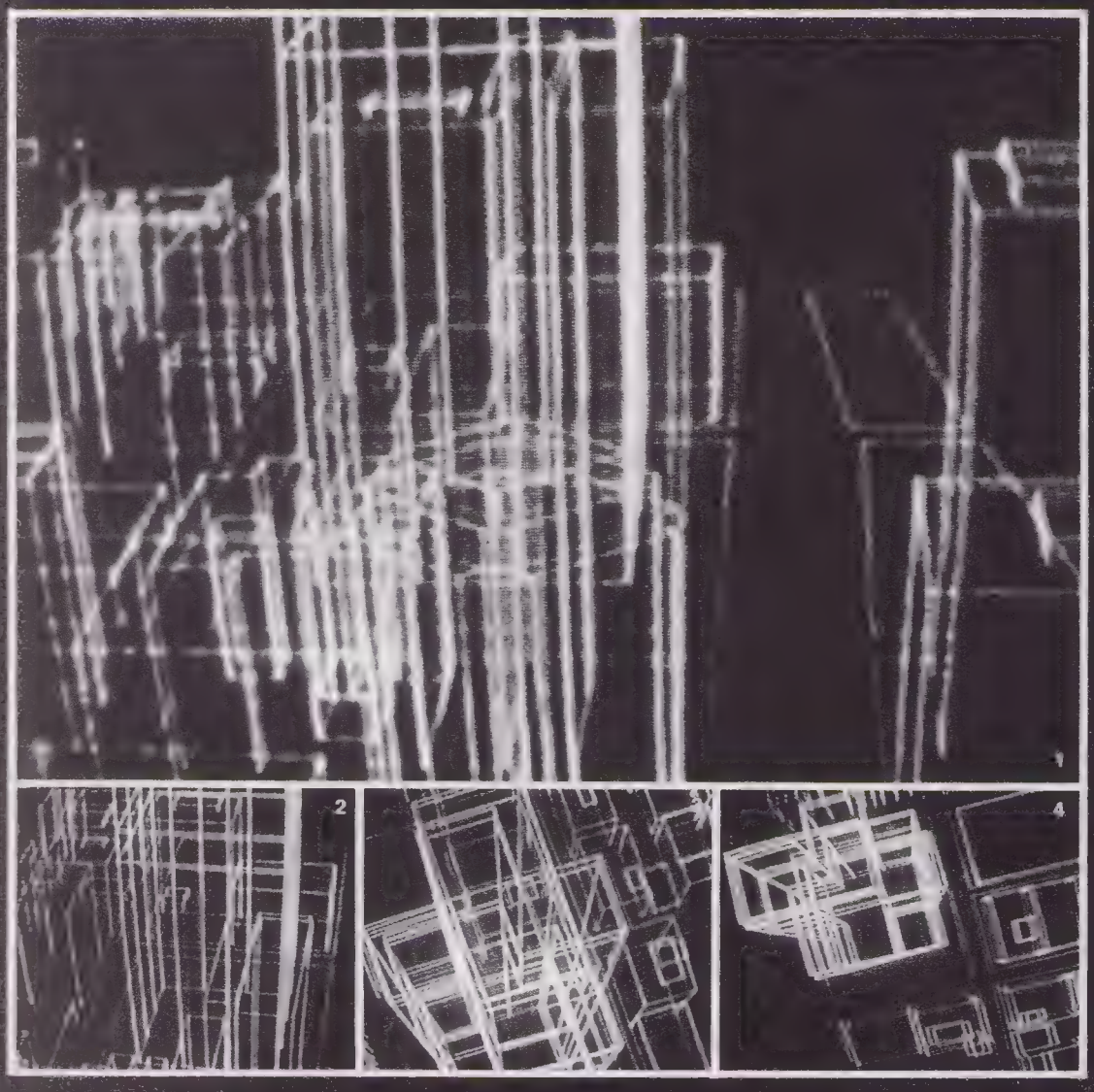
What has this got to do with computers?

Two major things: the first is a very simple image, made up of bits of information, achieves a startling complexity when seen at a distance; the second is that a computer, like an icon, has a high degree of complexity behind that simple image — complexity that you will have to understand to master the image.

Most reference books refer to a computer as 'an electronic calculating and problem-solving machine', and quote Charles Babbage as its inventor. Charles Babbage was a British mathematician (1791-1871) who planned a mechanical calculating machine that was the forerunner of the modern computer. His plans failed when the British Government refused him the financial support needed to complete his project — even though the British Royal Society recommended its development.

The reference books are wrong. The first working computer (one that mechanically stored information for later use) is the Jacquard loom that uses a system of punched cards to reproduce woven patterns automatically. It was invented by Joseph-Marie Jacquard (1752-1834), a silk weaver born in Lyons, France. Apprenticed to his father in the weaving trade, the boy showed a marked dislike for the weaving shed and all that pertained to it. Stifled by his father's authority, he attempted to devise a machine that could weave lace netting. He improved on previous looms and in 1804 he introduced the loom into his own factory. The result was predictable — the silk weavers of Lyon rioted. The *Conseil des Prudhommes* (a body appointed to safeguard the interests of the town) seized his machine, took it to the public square and destroyed it. Jacquard was branded as an enemy of the Commonwealth although he was later rewarded by Napoleon as a leader of French industry.

His machine survived and flourished. By the time of Jacquard's death in 1834, the appliance was in use in Britain and substituted for the drawboy on the draw loom. During the nineteenth century the Jacquard was continually altered and improved by British mechanics.



1. A computerised view of the
2. city area of Chicago, showing
3. how the computer can change
4. angles and still maintain the essential information.

The designer of Jacquard-woven fabric works very much as a computer operator of the late 1960s. The design is based on cards, ruled into squares. For every warp thread intended to be seen on the face of the cloth, the designer made a black square; all the white squares on that line indicated that the warp was not to appear. Once complete, the design is handed to the card-cutter, who punches holes into the card. In earlier computers (now run mostly on electronic memory) the punched card is used to store data that is read by detecting the positions of holes that have been punched.

Australia has a very notable pioneer in the world of computing. Percy Grainger (1882-1961) not only frequented English Country Gardens but worked on a series of mechanical ideas to produce the Grainger Free Music Machine.

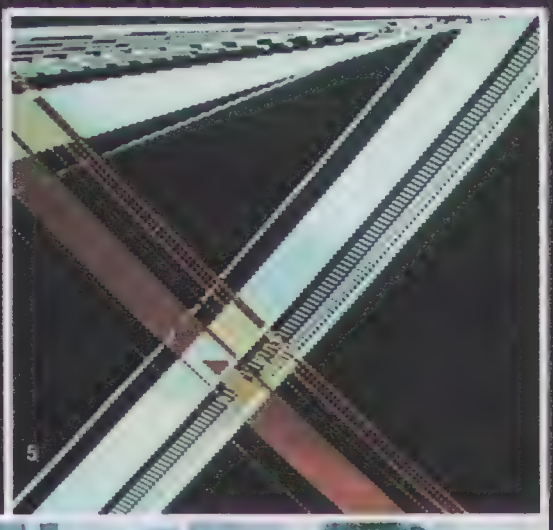
'It seems to me to be absurd to live in an age of flying, and yet not be able to execute tonal glides and curves — just as absurd as it would be to paint a portrait in little squares (as in the case of mosaic) [sic] and not to be able to use every type of curved lines. Out in nature we hear all kinds of lovely and touching 'free' (non-harmonic) combinations of tones; yet we are unable to take these beauties and expressivenesses into the art of music because of our armchair notions of harmony.'

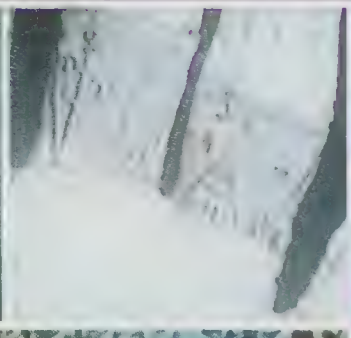
— Percy Aldridge Grainger, December 6, 1938.

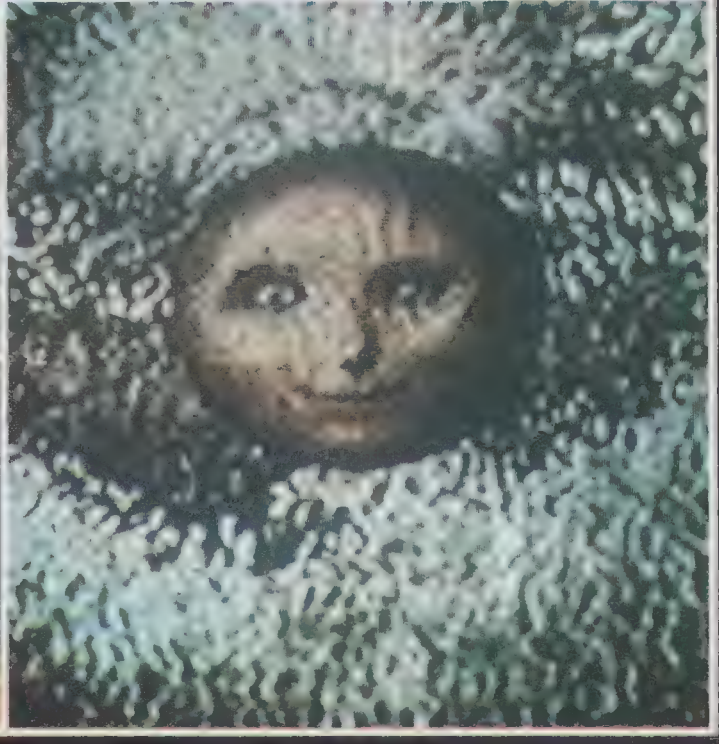
Grainger's Free Music Machine was electrically controlled and based on a variable pitch device within the range of the seven 'voices' planned for it. In essence, these were played by photocells that read the data on a clear plastic roll with inked on patterns to achieve pitch control. It owed as much to Jacquard as it did to pianolas and music boxes that could store information for replay on demand. Grainger had an obsession with mechanical devices and his archives contain an enormous amount of compelling material.

That's enough of computer history. What can a computer do for you in 1984? A computer is like a recalcitrant child. It will do what you ask but only after a laborious process of simple communication. Maybe this is why the actual computer is called 'hardware'.

The process of learning to programme a computer is time-consuming. One of the simplest is called '30 Hour Basic' (BBC), and it takes at least thirty hours to achieve nominal skills in programming. You have to understand that machine's 'language' and talk to it in a simple, step-by-step process that contains no errors. You also have to learn peripheral but important skills — such as the keyboard understanding of 'computerese', and patience. You'll also probably end up as a social outcast as you try to de-bug your latest programming problem.







5. TARTAN.

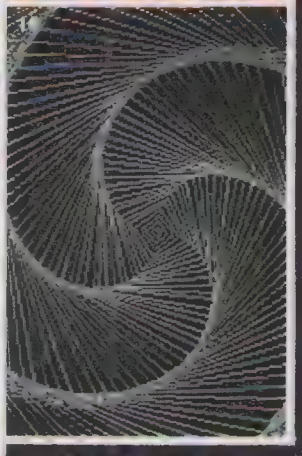
6. The degree of shading is 7. achieved by numbering the planes of the hand, cup or whatever object. These are given a number that translates to a grey tone.

8. The same process 9. applies to 10. the human face — 11. this 12. sequence shows a series of test computer images, which are later used to create the artist's colour imagery.

What is a programme?

It's a list of instructions that you give the computer to perform certain simple actions. In a way, it's very similar to a knitting pattern that tells the knitter how to produce a garment in an easy, step-by-step process.

The saving grace for the inept or disinterested programmer is 'software'. Software, as opposed to hardware, refers to all the programmes that can be run on a particular computer. For the most part, software isn't interchangeable between machines or systems, so when you buy a computer you shouldn't look only at the price, but also at the range of software available. A computer is dumb but versatile. It can assume many roles, and software helps to focus its skills. Each computer already has many hundreds of hours of programming in its memory — just so that you can use English words such as LOAD, LIST, and RUN. The software expands the computer's potential.



13. One way to get an image is to take a visual from a slide, graphic or live TV camera and process it through a facsimile processor, that converts the image to numbers in the computer.

14. Garry Benson. ZAP. 73 × 55 cms. Wool, linen, silk.

15. Empress Theodora (AD 526-547).

16. SPIRAL

You have probably heard of Apple, Tari, BBC, Commodore, Dragon, Epson, Jupiter, Lisa, Lynx, ORIC, Sinclair, IBM, Sanyo, Sharp, Hitachi, Sirius, Canon, Cybex, Hewlett Packard, Prime, Osborne, Toshiba, *et cetera*? They are all computers — most of them are 'micros'.

Today's microcomputers are basically cheaper versions of the large 'mainframe' computers that control a lot of our lives — and finances. They are different in two respects — micros have a limited amount of 'memory' and they're a lot cheaper.

'Memory' stores electronic signals that represent numbers. Some of these numbers are instructions — they tell the computer what to do with other numbers. These numbers are processed by the computer at the rate of many thousands of operations per second, taking information in and transforming it in ways that we would find boring, tedious — or impossible. Memory is measured in Random Access Memory — RAM, a set of storage locations, any of which can be accessed directly without having to work through the first one. A microcomputer with 16,000 or 16K of RAM will have enough memory to run entertaining games with good graphics. The word processor that I'm writing this on has about 32K of RAM which covers the large amount of memory needed to store text. I can extend this by using Disk Drive to store information on Floppy Disks.

Fairly simple graphics are available on medium-priced micros with 16-32K of RAM. Very basic graphics are also available on very cheap, low memory micros. The medium-priced micros usually also have the advantage of having a large range of software and 'high-resolution' graphics.

A microcomputer produces images by illuminating one (or several) dots at any of a number of positions on a screen. The dots are arranged in rows across and down the screen. The position and combination of dots makes up an image, very similar to the way that the mosaic fragments make up the face of the Empress Theodora in Ravenna. Artists have used this technique throughout art history — the work of the *Pointillists* in 19th Century France and the Modernists of the twentieth century are examples. The number of dots on the screen are not the same for every microcomputer — a typical grid would consist of 192 rows, each containing 256 dots — a total of 49,152 dots. The higher the number of dots 'resolution' the less grainy the image. As a rough guide 150 × 100 points on the screen would be low resolution, while 600 × 250 would be considered high.

How do you create an image? There are several ways — the most simple being to use a software package like 'Graphkey' or 'Paintbox' for the BBC MICRO B or a similar one for the computers listed below. Your computer dealer can tell you more. (N.B. We found computer and software outlets remarkably ignorant when we called around asking about graphics packages. ED.) If you want to design directly on the screen you can use a device such as a light pen. This allows you to draw, change and move sections of the picture simply by moving the pen across the screen. The pen is connected to the computer by a cable and you control the changes through the computer's keyboard. Its use enables designs to be created and changed very quickly. Certain shapes can be stored in the computer's memory and their position set by a pen by pressing the appropriate key. A Graphics Pad can be used with the Light Pen to display and change both drawings and text. The latest whizzbang design device is a Byte Stick that allows you to change individual light points with incredible accuracy.

It all depends on cost — for the BBC MICRO B, a Byte Stick costs $1,000; a Graphics Pad $500; a Light Pen $210, and a special Graphics ROM (Read Only Memory) which holds data permanently and cannot be altered by the computer or programmer — about $77. The cheapest way is to learn how to programme the computer and do it yourself. All it takes is time and money. The prices vary from shop to shop too.

All this explanation is OK, but which microcomputer should you buy?

It is impossible to give a detailed rundown of all the types, brands and capabilities of machine. Instead, I have chosen a range of four micros to compare. Keep in mind that the initial purchase of the micro isn't the last expense. You will need a colour monitor (your home TV set would be OK, but check to see if it has an RF connection) and possibly a disk drive or tape recorder — plus disks, software packages, and camera, film etc.

The last thing we need for creating computer graphics and keeping them is a camera. I suggest a SLR (single lens reflex) camera with a focal plane shutter, and possibly a macro lens that can focus down to a few centimetres. All photographs off a TV set should

17. This series shows how an
18. image is taken from a very
19. coarse block of tones into a
20. fine detail. The subject is a
21. tennis player.

22. A simple computer image
23. of a wine cup, showing all the
24. lines of its six sides — including
25. the obverse lines.

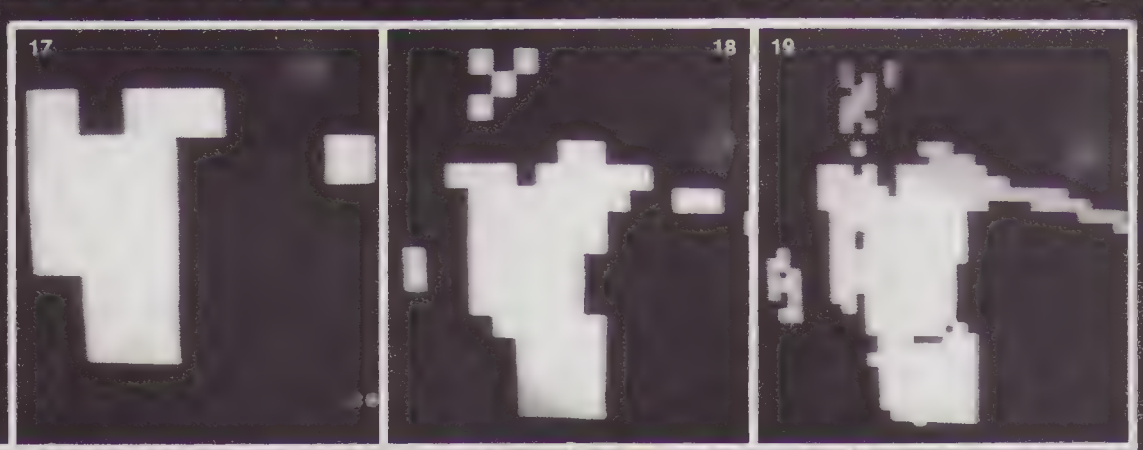
26. The computer can rotate this
27. image in any way to show the angles of the surface of the wine cup. The rear lines are still visible.

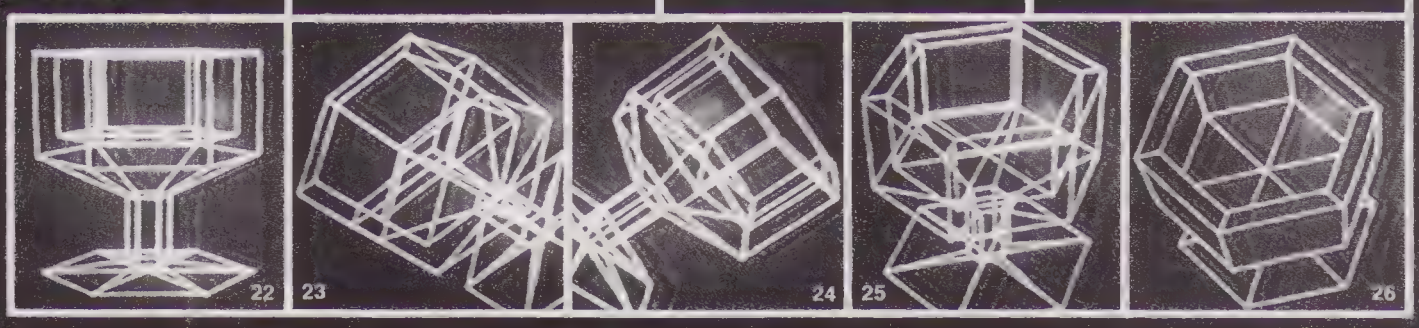
28. The computer is programmed to delete the lines which would not be seen from the front of the cup by the viewer.

29. Further programming can 'fill in' the angles to make the surface of the wine cup appear both round and shaded.

30. In order to highlight this roundness, a pattern is introduced with surface decoration.

31 The computerised combination of both provides a much more detailed surface shading.





COMPUTER COMPARISONS (prices are variable)

NAME	MEMORY	RESOLUTION	SOFTWARE	EXTRAS	COST (Variable)
SINCLAIR	16K	192 x 256	Large choice available in UK, will soon be here.	Connects to TV, cassette, own brand microdrive, Microprinter, etc.	$299
SPECTRUM	48K				$399
Advantages: Reasonably priced for a colour computer, wide range of software (games, etc.) available.					
Disadvantages: Very poor keyboard, gets hot after prolonged use, temperamental tape load, resolution just OK.					
COMMODORE VUC 64	64K	320 x 256	Very large range of software available.	Connects to cassette, TV, monitor, disk drive, printer	$499
Advantages: Very fast and good resolution screen graphics.					
Disadvantages: Learning and use of BASIC can be awkward.					
BBC MICRO B	32K	320 x 640	Good unit to upgrade. Large range of software and textbooks available. Good programming course.	Connects to cassette, TV, monitor, disk drive, printer, other BBC Micros.	$1399
Advantages: Wide choice of software, very versatile BASIC, good back-up materials, very good resolution.					
Disadvantages: Initially expensive, limited colour capacity, manuals can be difficult for beginners to understand.					
MacINTOSH	192K	512 x 342	Very little optional software.	All contained.	$4195
Advantages: Complex integrated graphic, word-processing and business software, including 'The Mouse' that manually guides on-screen commands.					
Disadvantages: Expensive for home user, although competitively priced for business market. Wonderful graphics capability but black and white only.					

(The above summary covers only the basic unit. Remember that monitors, printers, disk drives and extras for design — such as light pens, graphics pads and the Byte Stick all cost extra.)

be taken at 1/25th or 1/30th of a second. The reason is the TV image is made up of those same dot positions used by the computers and each half of the image is scanned every 1/50th of a second. The retention of vision of the human eye means that we see a whole image — not two halves. In the same way, a film records the latent image of the first half. Any faster speed results in either partial images or lines across the screen. A medium-speed colour film (about 125 ASA) should be sufficient for most TV images, but photograph them in a darkened room and underexpose slightly. A tripod is a necessity.

You now have a computer and an image. A word of warning — the computer is just another tool, similar to a pencil, a paintbrush or a photograph. Some artists complain the computer results in boring, repetitive graphics in the same format, the same colours, the same tired style. However, the beauty of a computer graphic is that you can play with it until you get what you want. When you do get that result, use it as a basis for your interpretation. The siren call of technology could mean that you could end up with lots of lovely equipment — and no ideas!

Garry Benson was chosen as the only craftsperson to exhibit in the INTERFACE Art and Technology Exhibition during the 1984 Adelaide Arts Festival.

The photographs in this article are reproduced by permission of the BBC from the programme **HORIZON, PAINTING BY NUMBERS**. A 60-minute cassette is available from the BBC, Westfield Towers, 100 William Street, Sydney, 2011.

WEAVEL Weaving Wonder

A Canberra computer expert has developed a program enabling weavers to design patterns. The program is for use on the Apple II Micro-computer and allows patterns to be displayed on the video screen. Steve McCusker, the designer, calls his program **WEAVEL** and says it allows pattern drafts and tie-ups to be displayed in seconds. Once patterns are designed, they can be electronically stored for later recall and use.

Steve became interested in weaving patterns when a local weaver asked him for help. As a computer scientist, Steve has been involved in other creative programming ventures — most recently, a computer-aided synthesizer for electronic music.

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and the South Australian College of Advanced Education are two of Steve's first clients and although he's not actively marketing **WEAVEL** Steve is enthusiastic about the system.

32. The first image shows a flight
33. simulator, the second and
34. third show an arcade game of fighter aircraft. Both systems use the same graphics systems but with comparative sophistication compared to the crude graphics of the arcade game.

35. Garry Benson. *Knees Analysis*, 73 x 53 cms. Computer-based design in wool, linen and cotton.

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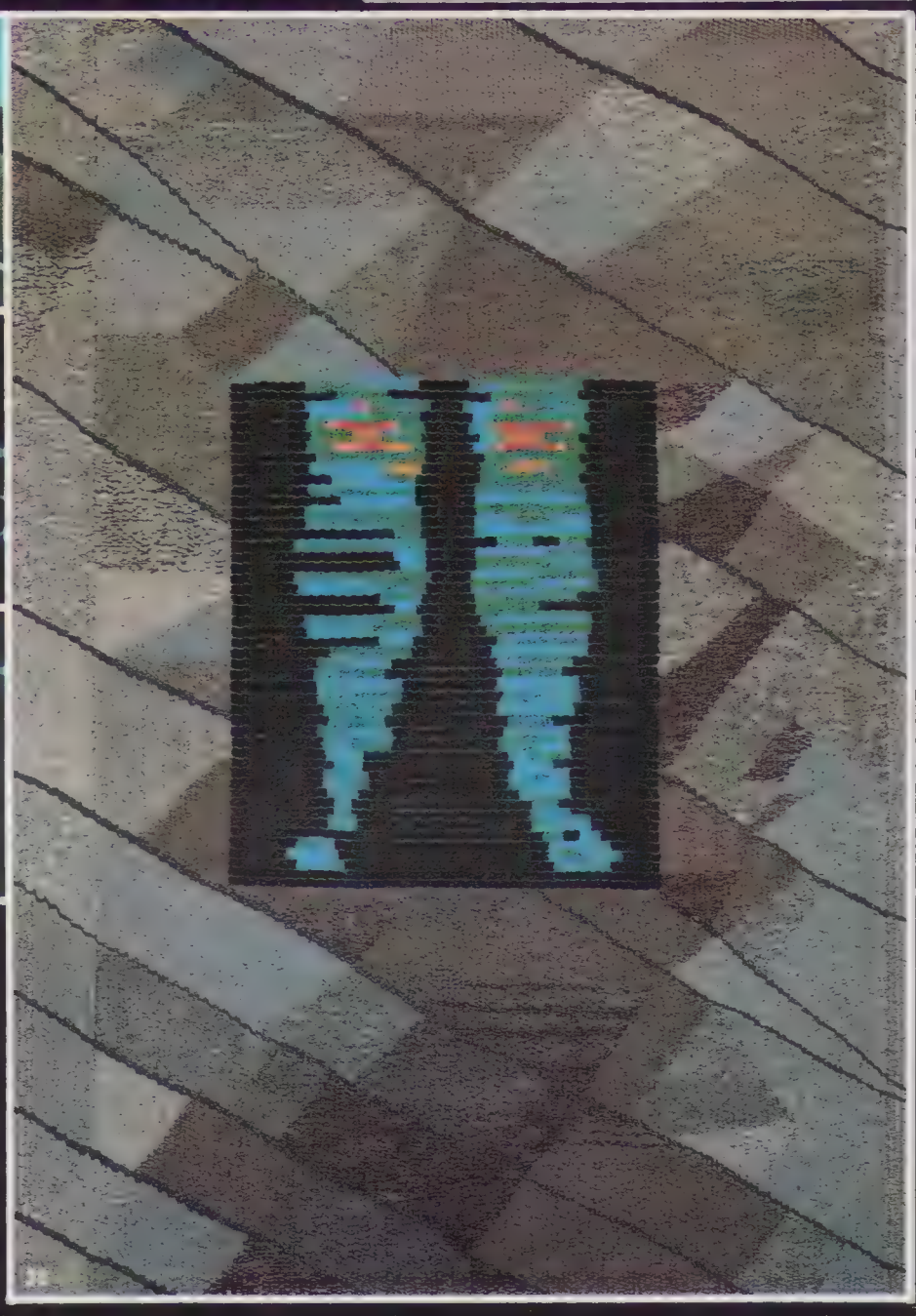
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1

PACIFIC GLASS
New Zealand

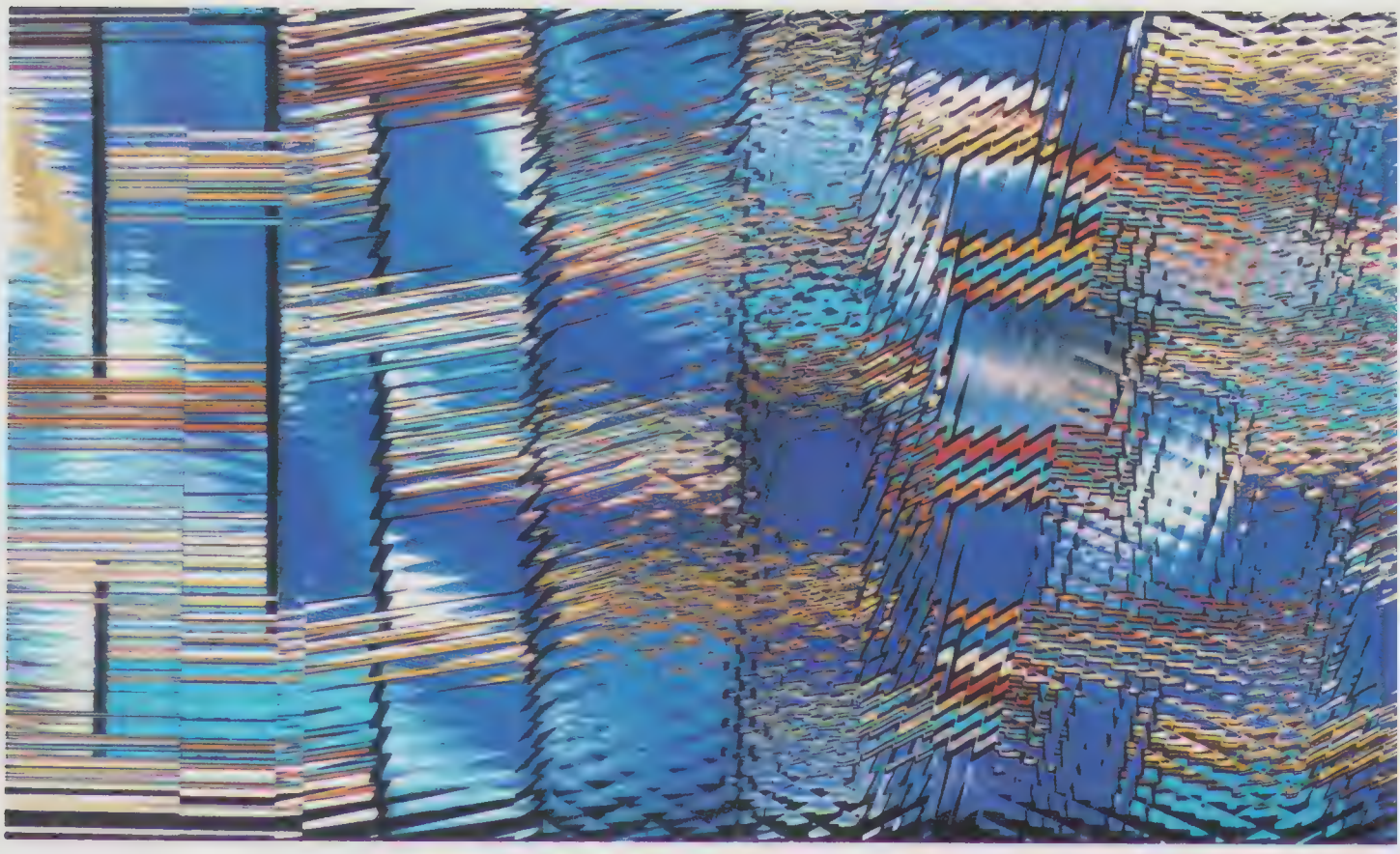
James Mack

Last year glass fever struck the Taranaki province of New Zealand in almost epidemic proportions. Many prominent personalities in the contemporary movement were in town: Marvin Lipofsky from the USA, Fred Daden from Britain, Makoto Ito from Japan and Johannes Schreiter from Germany, plus a large contingent of New Zealanders and a small group of Australian artists who rubbed shoulders at Tony Kuepfer's Glass Plant in Inglewood. Thirteen kilometres away in New Plymouth, the 63 piece exhibition entitled Pacific Glass '83 opened its two year tour of New Zealand.

The exhibition proclaimed itself a selected survey of contemporary glass art from five Pacific rim countries, curated by the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery with the assistance of the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand and the U.S. Embassy. It toured under the auspices of the New Zealand Art Gallery Directors Council.

The exhibition displayed an uneven quality; high points and the low points were far apart. The problems arose in part by curating names and techniques at a distance rather than being able to actually curate objects. In fairness to the curators, their prime aim was to bring together as great a variety of techniques as reasonably possible in the hope of stimulating new directions in New Zealand glass art activity. The overall looseness of curation was emphasised by the tightly drawn and selected home component to the show. Robert Bell, former President of the Crafts Council of

1. Paul Hartigan (NZ). *New Language* Neon and Steel, 1203 × 1205 cms. 1982.



1. Kristin Newton, (Japan) *Hong Kong Night* Faded glass and layered reeded glass, 420 × 1159 × 115 cms. 1982.

2 Takeo Hirayama, (Japan) *OP 1000.* Leaded glass, 415 × 595 × 215 cms. 1981-82

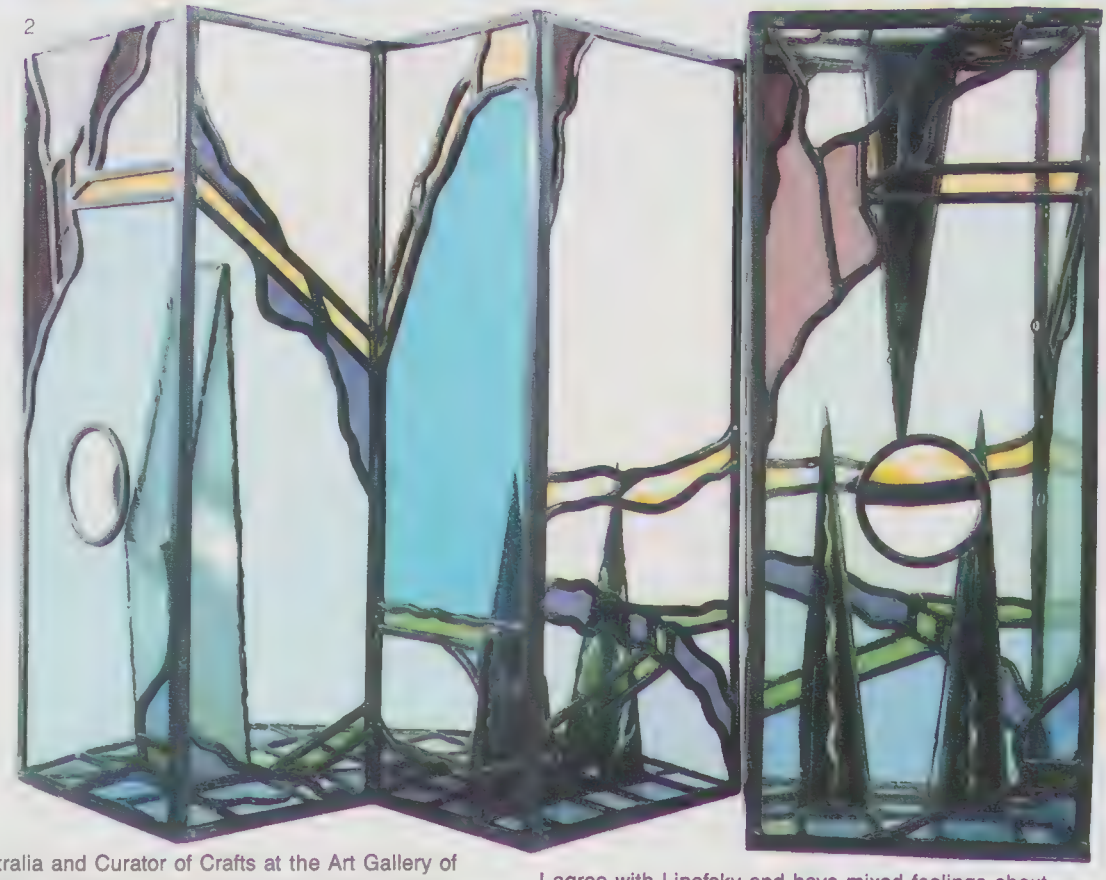
3 Robert Kehlmann, (USA). *IV: the Meeting.* Double-glazed, sandblasted glass, 702 × 702 cms. 1982.

4 Paul Marioni, (USA) *Floating Figure I.* Hand-rolled glass, 345 × 490 cms. 1982.

5 James Walker, (NZ). *Pussycat* Leaded glass. 1336 × 1005 cms. 1981-2.

6 Klaus Zimmer, (Aust.) *Aquarius.* Painted, laminated, etched, slumped, fused and leaded glass, 510 × 403 × 20 cms. 1980-83.

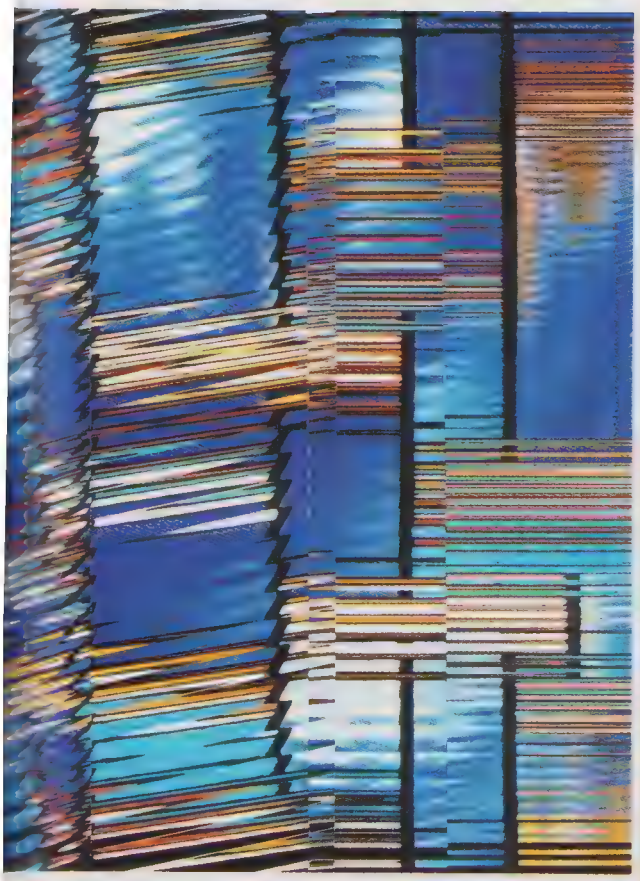
2



Australia and Curator of Crafts at the Art Gallery of Western Australia, chose nine New Zealand glass artists to exhibit and represented them with twelve works drawn from a total of nearly two hundred pieces presented. Though the New Zealand selection is good as a group, individual pieces pale in comparison against best works in the show. This comparison, object to object, can only be to the advantage of the New Zealand glass movement as a whole. Lipofsky, after the glass conference, pointed to the fact that New Zealand glass artists' work tends to be reminiscent of European design. He said, 'I didn't find them using the natural beauty of New Zealand within their work'.

I agree with Lipofsky and have mixed feelings about the undoubted influence that both Fred Daden from Britain and Johannes Schreiter will have after their intensive workshop sessions at Inglewood. On the plus side, both artists are superb technicians. Daden exhibited great mastery of the traditional aspects of the craft and blew controlled forms shaped from a repertoire several hundred years old. His control of form and traditional tools awed his audience and New Zealand glass artists need these skills.

Johannes Schreiter is a master artist and a superb teacher. His Inglewood workshop saw about fifty



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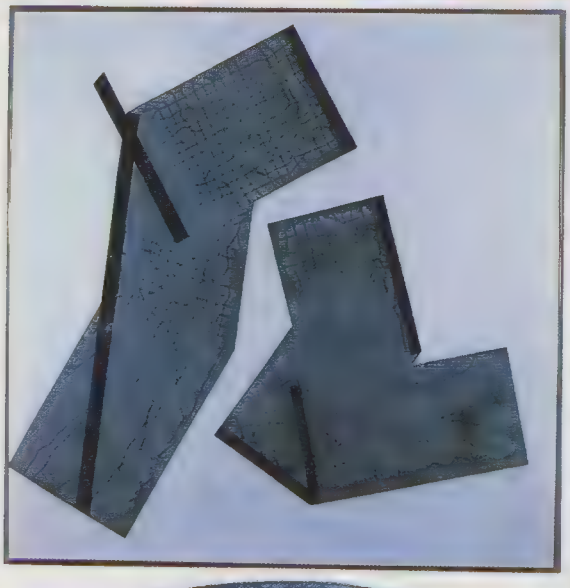

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people really getting to grips with design concepts. The art work was crisp and cultured. Schreiter's works in the exhibition are superbly controlled understatements fashioned by the restrictions of glass and lead. They were out of place in a Pacific show and this was obviously also observed by the exhibition organisers who published the Schreiter catalogue notes as an insert in the catalogue.

The place of the teacher and his or her influence on pupils was well demonstrated by Lipofsky who showed slides of student work. Nothing looked like Lipofsky; it was all well conceived and executed and very individualistic. Eclecticism is fine as a jumping-off point but if influences don't engender deeper thinking and

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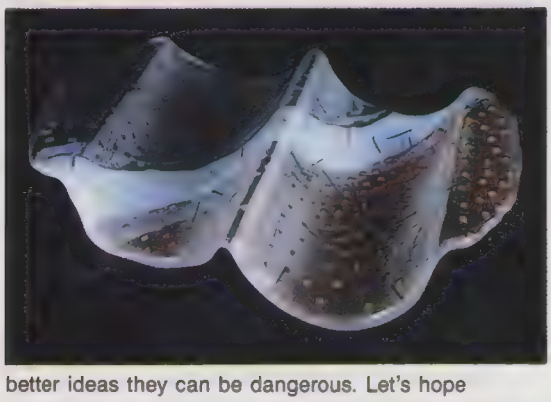

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better ideas they can be dangerous. Let's hope Lipofsky's call for more observation of the dynamism of the New Zealand landscape manifests itself before too long.

My favourite piece in the show is by Jay Musler from the USA. His 'Fleshpot' is deliciously sensuous. On first look, it could have been *paté de verre*; it is sandblasted, cut and has a painted surface with diffused soft light. The work explores the outer edges of what is considered 'acceptable' glass technique. The piece is slumped rather than blown; additive pieces are epoxy-resined rather than fused. The colour is painted rather than contained in the molten glass. But rules are made to be broken.

Right within the tradition are the wonderful, masterful creations of Dick Marquis. His 'Orange White Blue Teapot/Tripod' (1982) and 'Black White Pink Teapot/Tripod' (also of '82) are virtuoso works of art of the highest distinction. 'Elephant Horn' and 'Cockatoo Horn' are equally zany and superbly accomplished. Marquis also has a way with words as shown in his catalogue statement: 'I see my recent work as a sort of contemporary folk art commentary about things that interest me and how they relate to historical precedents in my craft and the current states of glass and art while hopefully displaying finesse in terms of form, colour, imagery, and technique.' Both Australia and New Zealand have had visits from Marquis. While in New Zealand for the last glass conference he said, 'The approach to glass in this country is vigorous, innovative and inventive in terms of the technology which has been achieved on low budgets with 'do-it-yourself know how'.'

As is often the case with visiting artists, the overwhelming nature of Marquis's contribution remained dormant for some time. Minor sorties into his technique were made, but the processes he exhibited were too labour-intensive. In recent times, however, the Kiwi ingenuity that Marquis admired so much has been exhibited by Garry Nash at the Sunbeam Glass Company. Nash has invented a simple rod-making technique and applied it successfully in his latest works. These pieces look nothing like Marquis's, but some of the Marquis spirit is there and a lot of the magic.

Two other American glass artists also presented exciting work. Robert Kehlmann explores the medium with sandblasting and laminating and creates pictorial works that are subtly beautiful. Jack Schmidt uses glass sculpturally and fashions plate glass and stainless steel into majestic works.

Both of these artists exemplify Robert Bell's assumption that 'American glass artists' work is characterised by an almost aggressive individualism which combines techniques and materials from the wide area of glassworking to create a rather specialised brand of sculpture'.

Dale Chihuly must surely be one of the modern US masters of hot glass. I liked the flamboyant mastery of the macchia technique (meaning spotted, mottled or sketched-in) but felt that his works in this exhibition were rather disappointing. We need a major retrospective exhibition of his work in the South Pacific and a workshop visit.

The Australian submission was small which was disappointing, but both Warren Langley and Nick Mount presented work of interest. Langley's 'Line of Interaction No 27' (1982) of kiln-formed glass and argon tubing was the only flat glass in the show not showing manifest influence from the Germans. Nick Mount's 'Fishing Floats 1 and 2' are extremely accomplished glass blowing. Australia should be careful whom they send to observable forums. One of the Australian contingent publicly stated that there has been no art in Australia since Sidney Nolan, a statement which caused some hackles to rise.

The highlight of the Japanese entry was 'Hagoromo' (1982) by Kyohei Fujita. Fujita's boxes have been seen in several shows here and he is often represented in international exhibitions. His moulding process using gold and metallic foil and glass chips is extremely beautiful. His works do exactly what his catalogue statement espouses, they 'manifest the Orient and Japan'. Makoto Ito attended the glass conference where he demonstrated colour layering techniques which awed his New Zealand counterparts. His exhibition piece 'Wave 1' (1982) is dazzling in its

1. Richard Marquis, (USA). *Cockatoo Horn.* Blown and torch-worked glass, 630 × 150 cms. 1982.

2. Richard Marquis, (USA). *Black, white pink teapot/tripod.* Handformed, constructed glass with aluminium and moulded resin, 1160 × 520 cms. 1982.

3. Kyohei Fujita, (Japan). *Hagoromo.* Mould-blown glass with gold foil and coloured glass chips, 145 × 228 × 230 cms. 1982.

4. Marvin Lipofsky, (USA). *California Storm Series, No. 18.* Blown, cut and cased glass, 280 × 330 × 280 cms. 1982.

5. Marvin Lipofsky, (USA). *Californian Storm Series, Sputpiece, No. 25.* Blown, cut and cased glass, 210 × 280 × 460 cms. 1982.

6. Makoto Ito, (Japan). *Wave I.* Slumped crystal glass with fused colour, 47 × 360 × 277 cms. 1982.

7. Jay Musler, (USA). *Fleshpot.* Cut, sandblasted and painted glass, 165 × 507 cms. 1982.

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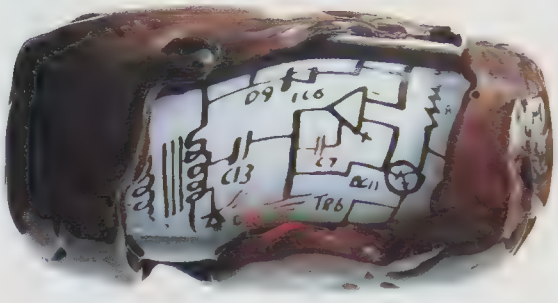
1. Warren Langley, (Aust.). *Line of Interaction, No. 27.* Kiln-formed glass and argon tubing, 895 × 1545 × 110 cms. 1982.

2. Garry Nash, (NZ). *Circuits.* Hand-formed, cut and polished glass. 180 × 88 cms. 1983.

3. David Wright, (Aust.). *Silver Plants.* Fused and bonded glass, 455 × 300 × 27 cms. 1982.

4. Dale Chihuly, (USA). *Maccha Group II* (3 pcs.). Blown glass, 200 × 650 × 400 cms. 1982. (Photography by Dick Busher).

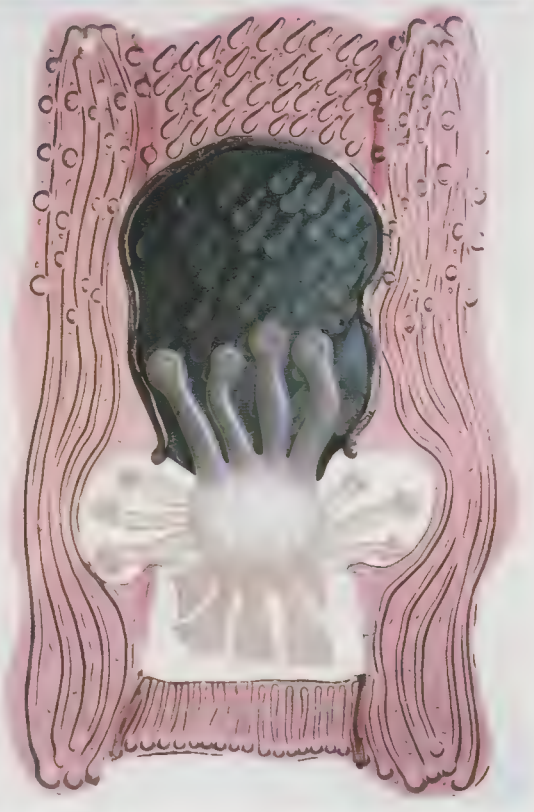


technical virtuosity but slight (even though it is undeniably handsome).

As indicated earlier, the New Zealand works pale when compared alongside masterworks from overseas but one knows that the energy level is high and it is possible to recognise outstanding talent among the New Zealand artists represented in the exhibition. Garry Nash of the Sunbeam Glass Company is mastering a formidable range of techniques which he is creatively fashioning into some very exciting objects. He is the man to watch, the man with the potential and the man with the ideas. Also from Sunbeam is John Croucher whose 'Hot Lips Trilogy' (1982) shows his control of form and technique. Nash and Croucher also fashion beautiful domestic ware which is starting to find a devoted market. Peter Raos and Mel Simpson are exploring the magic of hot glass and creating small beautiful objects that are well-fashioned. The flat glass artists David Clegg, Robert Middlestead and James Walker present works that hold up fairly well but are still stylistically caught in the dynamic flush from Germany in recent years.

Lipofsky's admonition to the hot glass artists to use the energies of the land as source motivation needs also to be directed at the stained glass artists. Contrary to the above, glass art in New Zealand is in a healthy state of development. It is exciting, innovative and searching and researching. So much so, in fact, that the writer prompted his management board to make a commitment to spend up to $5000 a year for the next three years on historic and contemporary New Zealand glass.

'Pacific Glass '83' is on the road in New Zealand for the next two years. During that time Garry Nash will be touring the country under the aegis of the N.Z.



Students Arts Council demonstrating the making of hot glass with the aid of a portable furnace he designed.

The glass movement is certainly alive and well in New Zealand. Some artists have gone beyond trial and error and are now in command of their hot glass medium — making forms over which they have sensitive control and using techniques which are an extension of the creative process.

For the first time, ceramic movement in New Zealand has some real competition; a challenge it should observe because, when it comes to the crunch, food and flowers look better in glass, and this is where the major market is. We are blessed with a small but growing band of aesthetic masochists who are prepared to stand for many hours a day in front of furnaces raging at temperatures around 1200 degrees celsius to provide an awakening audience with access to a mysterious and magical material that has been fashioned with alchemy on a par with turning base metal into gold.

The Melbourne College of Advanced Education

Ceramics in the Seventies

John Teschendorf

The last decade has seen the establishment of several major 'non-gallery' ceramics collections in Australia. The Crafts Board of the Australia Council, Mayfair Collection, Victorian State Craft Collection and the Jackson Collection now provide a real alternative to the traditional glass cases of establishment approval.

Less accessible yet equally well intentioned have been collections based on university, institute and college campuses. Usually aligned with a campus gallery, many have suffered from the enlightened withdrawal of federal funding from tertiary education. The Melbourne College of Advanced Education Art Collection is among the hopeful survivors, representing nearly fifty years of occasionally inspired institutional gathering. The history of this fine Australian collection is a fascinating study in the development of educational philosophy and the role of the visual arts. Prior to 1971 the **only** three-dimensional piece in the collection was a portrait bust of an illustrious, long-departed principal.

With the establishment of the Gryphon Gallery and

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1. Sandra TAYLOR 'Room One' 1977. Acquired 1977.

2. Alex LECKIE 'The Couple' 1979. Acquired 1979.

appointment of a Curator/Director, acquisition policy that reflected the real needs of the Melbourne campus was quickly developed. The unique structure of the B. Ed. Art and Craft degree course was recognised by establishment of new purchase committees embracing sculpture and ceramics, photography and craft areas. Successive college administrtions have continued to fund the acquisitions program, a significant achievement.

The early ceramic purchases are tangible proof that ceramics studies existed somewhere on campus and when Joan Campbell first entertained students in 1971 it seemed only right that a large *raku* form be acquired from the legendary Marg Richie's Little Bourke Street Gallery. Pieces by Doug Alexander, Peter Travis, Harold Dover and Vic Greenaway were indicative of their association with college programs and along with several other key works, formed the basis of a ceramics collection boasting some seventy major examples by over sixty Australian and overseas ceramic artists.

Collecting by committee can be fraught with danger, yet a mixture of good luck and good management allowed this notable collection to assemble without major controversy. A balance has been kept between functional and conceptual works and although never a major consideration, the fact that the collection is housed within a teaching environment has influenced the purchase or rejection of certain works. The college artist-in-residence program resulted in a large Agi Yoeli lion (purchased by the Students' Association) and several typically aggressive Alex Leckie pieces. The Leckie residency will be long remembered by students, potters and publicans alike.

Following seminars and workshops, many overseas visitors have made generous gifts to the collection. Works by Brian Newman, American glass artist Richard Marquis, the great Tatsuso Shimoaka and

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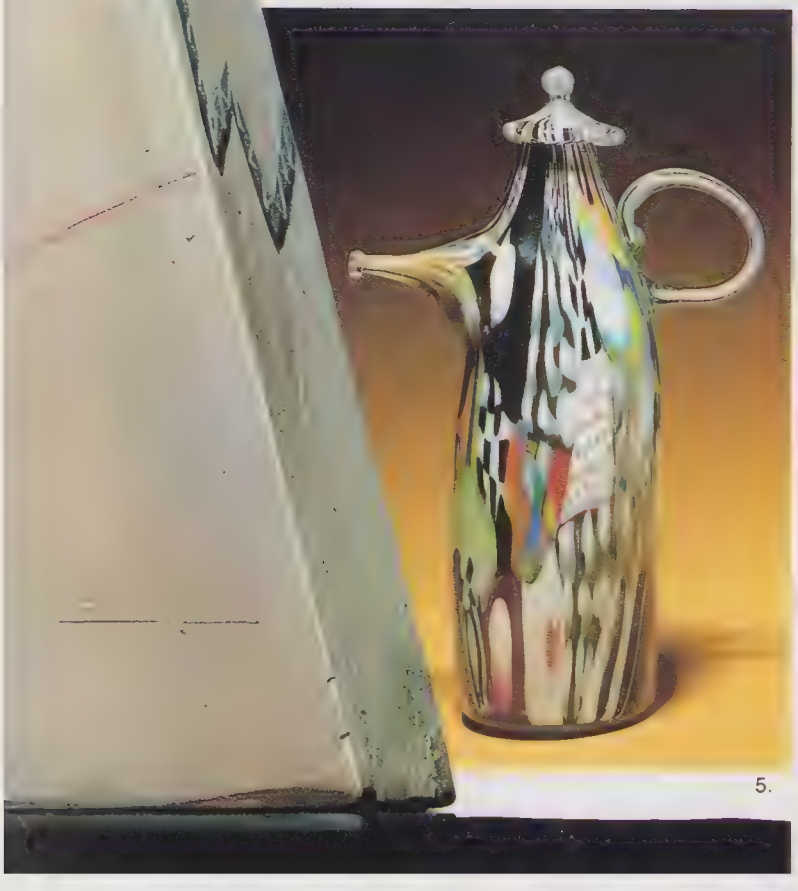
3. Kathy SOANES
Untitled 1981.
Acquired 1982.

4. Ken LEVESON
'Organic Ice
Creams' 1971.
Acquired 1971.

5. Richard
MARQUIS
'Coffee pot'
(glass) 1974.
Acquired 1974.

6. Gwyn HANNSON
Jug — wood-
fired stoneware
1977. Acquired
1977.



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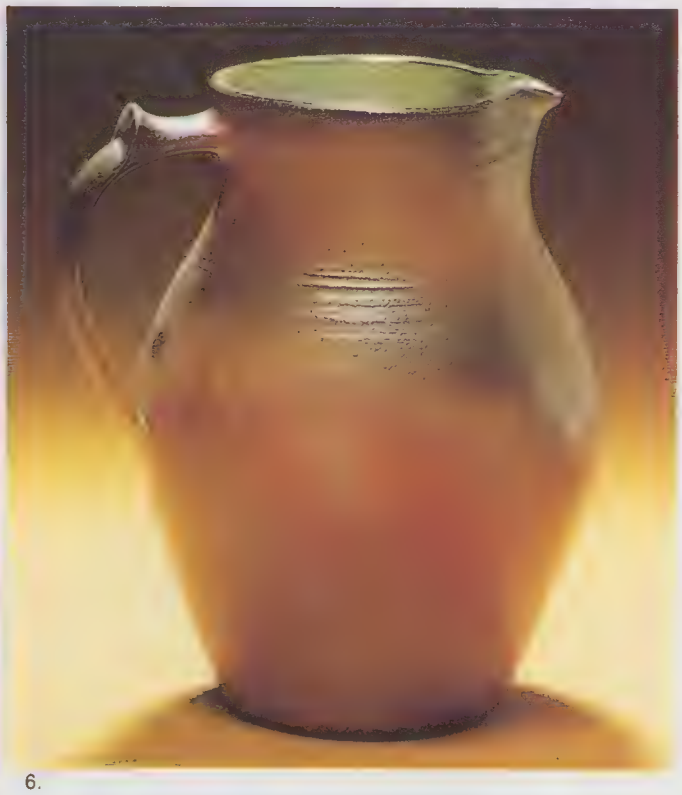

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more recently Kenje Kato coming from this source. August lecturing staff, past and present are well represented. Such works are only acquired at public exhibition. This group also includes numerous visiting lecturers such as Greg Wain, Peter Hook, Alan Peascod, Ken Leveson and Harry Memmott. The potentially contentious area of student representation has been solved by a process of self-selection. Mark Stoner and Joy Georgenson had exhibited widely even before being selected for Faenza in 1980, whilst Kathy Soanes and Nigel Allison somewhat monopolised the Walker Ceramic Award during 1980 and 1981.

During 1977 and early 1978 the purchase committee set aside a major share of available funds for ceramics acquisition. Good luck played its part in this venture, for not only were Buzz Hughan, Victoria Howlett, Gwynn Hannson, Stephen Benwell, Greg Daly and Ian Sprague able to supply major works, but two Sydney exhibitions were perfectly timed. The inaugural exhibition at the then Crafts Council Gallery ('The Twelve Days of Christmas') provided a large Ray Hearne Triptych 'From Man to Man' and Alan Watt's porcelain 'Baby with Birds'. From Art of Man Gallery came Sandray Taylor's 'Room One' . . . never will this writer forget gazing down with horror at a baggage trolley laden with huge cases, all stacked neatly on top of a flimsy cardboard box containing 'Room One'. To the unending credit of the people's airline only one parrot fell off its perch.

Recent acquisitions are now attempting to update the work of major ceramic artists, Vic Greenaway's dry glaze and Alan Peascod's gold lustre are now sharing space with the erotic surface decoration of Melbourne painter Murray Walker.

It is difficult to forecast the future of this collection. For institutions and their galleries are inexorably tied to the future of tertiary education in Australia. To reflect upon the far sighted decisions that established the collection and to recognise the historical significance of acquisitions covering the whole spectrum of contemporary Australian visual arts is to hope that at least one more decade of occasionally inspired gathering lies ahead.

7.

7. Joy GEORGESON Smoked Numbat 1978. Acquired 1978.

8. Tatsuo SHIMOAKA Stoneware Vase 1972. Acquired 1972.

9. Stephen BENWELL Container (vase in two sections) 1977.

10. Noel FLOOD 'Ceramic Specimen Vase' 1974. Acquired 1975.

Photography by Tony Boyd, Melbourne College of Advanced Education.

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1. Glass panel 450 × 450 mm. Lamination, sandblasting, paint and mixed media. 1983

2. Glass panel, 550 × 640 mm. Opal glass enamel glass paint, acid-etching and leading 1983

KEN BARTLETT

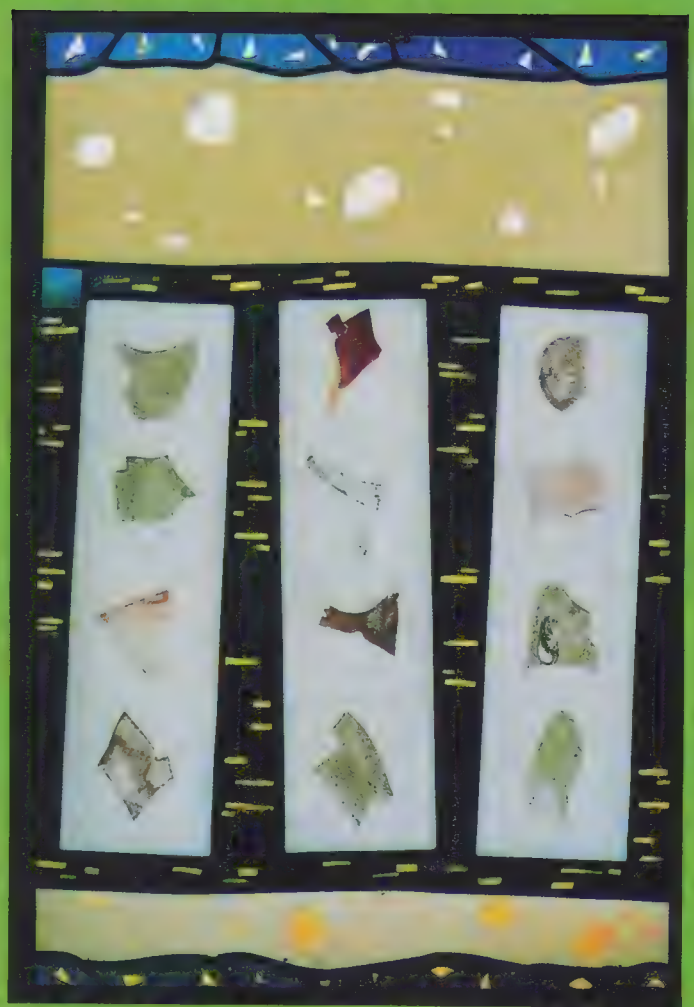
Ken is a young Melbourne-born glass artist with a studio on the Gold Coast called Art Glass. He trained with Robert Clark in Victoria and attended classes by Klaus Zimmer at the Caulfield Institute of Technology. Ken has well-defined views about his art and his work is equally eloquent.

What I want to be . . .

To cleanse the mind, perhaps draw a blank to begin with, then create curiosity and intrigue and leave one with a good feeling — not in the head, as symbolism would tend to do, but that good feeling that fills your chest. I want it to be new, original, different; whatever it turns out to be and continues to strive for; whatever the amazing element of development gives me.

KEN BARTLETT

What I don't want to be . . .!



I don't want to rely on any symbols or recognizable forms — seams invisible and too easy.

I don't want, and haven't been, influenced by anyone. It seems that craft develops like a snowball; bits and pieces of the same ilk merging and relying on each other for their direction.

I don't want it to say anything

I don't want to rely on symmetry and the use of patterns in their formal state.

I don't want to use natural or nature's forms

I don't want to be caught up in trying to be clever with different techniques.

3. Glass panel, 750 x 400 mm. Opal glass, 'found' glass, leading. 1983.

4. Glass panel, 640 x 420 mm. Opal glass, paint, acid- etching, leading. 1983.

5. Glass panel, 800 x 480 mm. Opal glass paint, acid- etching, leading. 1984.

STURT CATALOGUE 1984

As every lover of fine Australian crafts will know, Sturt is a name synonymous with Australia's finest craft for over forty years. Founded in Mittagong in the New South Wales Southern Highlands in 1941, Sturt Craft Workshops have been pioneers in Australian crafts and have nurtured many of our finest craft people.

Now, for the first time in its history, Sturt has prepared a unique catalogue of superb works being made available for sale by mail. The Sturt Catalogue is drawn from all its crafts workshops and those of its Associate Craftsmen. Each object has been carefully chosen to represent the variety of talent available to Sturt. Each is available in a special limited edition created specifically for this catalogue. The value of fine craft in Australia has increased enormously in recent years, so your investment in these beautiful pieces is a rare opportunity not to be missed.

THE WORKSHOPS

Sturt Craft Workshops were created in 1941 by Winifred West, the famed headmistress of Frensham at Mittagong about 120 KM south of Sydney. The buildings comprise three weaving rooms, two wood workshops, a jewellery workshop, a pottery, a visiting craftsman's workshop, a shop selling Sturt products together with an exhibition gallery, a cottage and three residential units. The buildings are very simple, mostly white painted wood and set in a beautiful garden full of trees and flowering shrubs.

In many ways, the history of Sturt represents the development of modern fine crafts in Australia from obscure beginnings. A tradition was forged which has led to many of its crafts people becoming leaders in their profession both in Australia and internationally with their work represented in major Australian galleries and many overseas collections.

WEAVING

The weaving workshop began in 1941 with a large pedal loom and three spinning wheels brought out from England in 1936 by Ruth Ainsworth. In 1951 a master weaver from Germany, Erike Gretschel set up a production workshop which is essentially the same workshop which Elizabeth Nagel has managed with such distinction since she arrived (also from Germany) in 1959.

Among the most interesting experiments at Sturt has been the use of natural dyes from local native plants such as the gum tree bark used to dye yarns for upholstery in the National Library. A great diversity of commissions from major Australian institutions and abroad have given the Sturt weaving workshop great scope for colour and texture experiments.

WOODWORK

Woodwork classes commenced at Sturt in 1941 given by O. E. Southerden, resident carpenter at Frensham. He was succeeded by several talented woodcraftsmen including Tony Fulford who arrived in 1960 and remains in charge of Workshop 1 today. Most of the work produced is commissioned and has found its way into homes, offices, churches and other public buildings all around the world. Notable commissions include two potters wheels sent to Borneo, twenty medallion cases for the Australian Academy of Science, a Bishop's chair for Crookwell church and chairs for the Women's College Sydney University.

POTTERY

The pottery was founded by Ivan McMeekin in 1954 and became the first pottery in 1954 in New South Wales to produce stoneware from local materials. Excellent clay deposits were found at Sturt itself and in the nearby Nattai Valley where a natural porcelain clay turns delicate blue after firing and is known as Mittagong Blue. Other local glaze materials vary between dark green matt to shining black produced by syenite from Mount Gibralter and pale green celadons from the pit clay.

Col Levy and Les Blakebrough came to Sturt as assistants to McMeekin and subsequently became two of Australias most celebrated potters. Their influence has been profound and attracted great attention throughout Australia. Many leading potters visited and worked at Sturt including Shiga Shigeo, a Japanese potter from Kyoto whose beautiful objects are renowned in many countries.

Sturt pottery is represented in most state and national collections and has been exhibited in Expos and major exhibitions throughout the world.

METAL CRAFT/JEWELLERY

The metal workshop was started in 1969 by its present manager, leading jeweller Ray Norman. Much of the work is carried out on a commission basis and experiments have been made with designs and old metal craft techniques such as "lost wax" casting. Products have included silver and gold tableware, jewellery for both men and women, and work with gold, precious and semi-precious stones and fossilized wood.

ITEM 1

Elizabeth Nagel:
Set of 2 wall hangings
40cmx100cm each.
Hand spun and fleece dyed wool on flax warp.
Gobelin technique.
Limited edition of three sets:
each set $600.00.

INVESTMENT IN STURT'S FINE CRAFTS IS

ELIZABETH NAGEL

Elizabeth Nagel has been a master weaver at Sturt since 1959 when she arrived in Australia from Germany. She trained in Stuttgart and had her own workshop in Koenigsfeld. She has established a unique reputation at Sturt where her workshop has come to symbolise Sturt's values of excellence in craft combined with community involvement. Many talented young weavers have trained with her in addition to the countless people, both young and old, from Frensham School and the Mittagong district, who have learnt weaving in her workshops. She has an extensive output of hand-woven articles and frequently has been commissioned by private and public institutions.

ITEM 2

Elizabeth Nagel: Floor rug, 105cmx180cm, hand-spun wool on flax warp, predominantly red or blue.

Limited edition of 4 in red and 4 in blue: $380.00ea.

TOBY MUIR-WILSON

Born and educated in Tasmania, Toby Muir-Wilson was taught woodturning by his father and afterwards started woodworking at the famed John Makepeace School at Parnham in England. He managed one of Sturt's woodwork shops until 1982 and is presently working at Forrest in Tasmania. He is an Associate Craftsman of Sturt.

ITEM 3

Toby Muir-Wilson: Stool, 40cm long x 26cm high x 26cm wide.

Limited edition of 9 comprising 3 in blackwood, 3 in celery top pine and 3 in myrtle: $164.00 each.

IAN McKAY

Ian McKay was born in Queensland and studied pottery under Col Levy. He has had his own workshops in New South Wales and Queensland, and taught ceramics at the College of Art in Brisbane. He has managed the Sturt pottery since 1982. He has exhibited extensively and has held one man exhibitions at Brisbane in 1978 and 1981. He has studied in Japan and is much influenced by the qualities and feeling of traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony wares.

ITEM 4

Ian McKay: Cylindrical oil-shot Temmoku glazed vase, 23cm high.

Limited edition of 15: $200.00 each.

ITEM 5

Ian McKay: Spherical Celadon glazed vase, 22cm high x 25.5cm diameter.

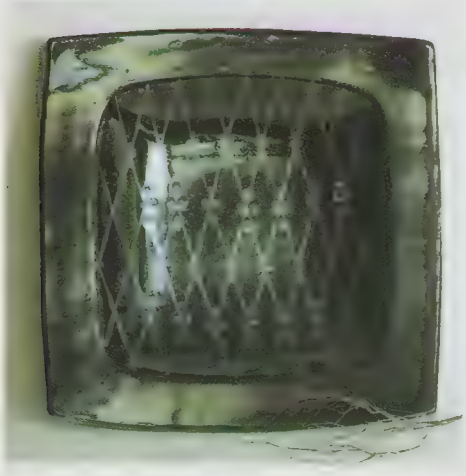
Limited edition of 15: $200.00 each.

A MUST FOR ANY SERIOUS COLLECTOR

LES BLAKEBROUGH

Les Blakebrough is one of the most celebrated sons of Sturt where he managed the pottery from 1960 to 1973 after originally training with Ivan McMeekin. He is one of Australia's outstanding potters whose work is seen throughout the world. Perhaps more than any other Australian potter, he has been responsible for developing Australian pottery into an art form. His work shows many influences from traditional Japanese pottery. He now works at Mount Nelson in Tasmania, and is an Associate Craftsman of Sturt.

ITEM 6 Les Blakebrough: Large stoneware bowl 58cm diameter.
Limited edition of 10: $1,000.00 each.



ITEM 7

Les Blakebrough: Large square stoneware plate 45cm square.
Limited edition of 10: $700.00 each.

RAY NORMAN

Ray Norman is a noted jeweller who founded the metal workshop in 1969. Born and trained in Sydney, he has travelled and exhibited widely and is very fascinated by the integration of contemporary forms with traditional and natural materials in his jewellery. His work is represented in all major Australian galleries as well as in a number of overseas collections.

ITEM 9

Ray Norman: Set of six pendants in sterling silver, enamelled, with yellow gold leaf.
Limited edition of 10 sets: $375.00 each set. The pendants are also available singly at $75.00 each.

ITEM 8

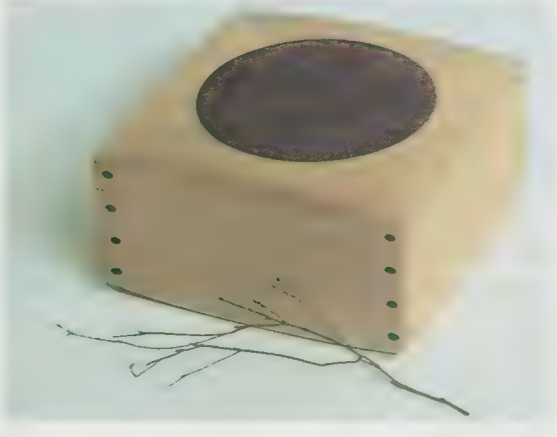
Ray Norman: Bronze patined gilt paper knife with sterling silver. Limited edition of 10 $150.00ea.
Also a single knife in sterling silver and yellow gold: Price on application.

ALAN WALE

Alan Wale was born in London and trained there at the City and Guilds of London Institute where he learnt the exquisite traditional craft of fine cabinet making. He has been a woodworker for 36 years and is well known as a teacher as well as producing most of his work for private commissions. He is an Associate Craftsman of Sturt and presently works at Beecroft in New South Wales.

ITEM 10

Alan Wale: Small box, 14cm wide, 14cm deep, 6.5cm high in Tasmanian Huon pine with lift-off lid, inlayed with mallee root, corners pegged with decorative dowels and with all woods finished in their natural colours. Limited edition of 25: $128.00 each.



PETER ADAMS

Peter Adams was born in Victoria and initially studied law but found a greater interest in furniture making. He has managed Sturt's wood workshop 2 since 1982 and since then has produced an astonishing array of magnificent furniture to original designs, mostly for commission. His work is in very heavy demand.

ITEM 11

Peter Adams: Wood wall unit, 120cm high, 90cm wide and 45cm deep. Unit is collapsible with ebony wedges and adjustable shelf pegs.

Limited edition of 10, comprising 3 in Australian red cedar, 3 in Huon pine, 2 in silver ash, one in Queensland walnut and one in black bean: $750.00ea.

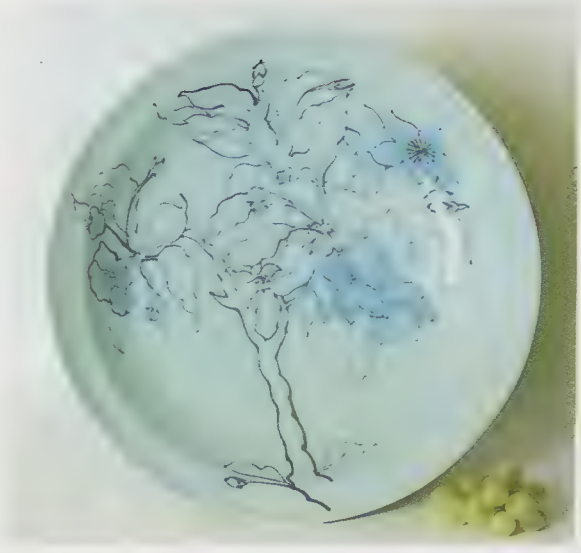
ALISTAIR WHYTE

Alistair Whyte was born in Melbourne and trained at Bendigo College of Advanced Education and later in Kyoto in Japan for several years where he studied the fabulous Kyoto porcelain techniques. He is an Associate Craftsman of Sturt and is presently working at East Warburton, Victoria.

ITEM 12

Alistair Whyte: Large blue and white porcelain dish 35cm diameter.

Limited edition of 20: $150.00 each.



AUTHENTICITY OF THE STURT LIMITED EDITIONS

All the craft works in this catalogue are produced in strictly limited editions as specified in the catalogue. No further objects will ever be made available by any of the crafts people precisely in the style and decorations of the editions presented exclusively in this catalogue. This preserves the intrinsic value and uniqueness of each object. Each object is individually hand crafted by each master craftsman so it must be recognised there will be slight variations from object to object in each limited edition.

To ensure the authenticity of each item, a certificate of authenticity will accompany the object when it is delivered to you. The certificate will include a description of the object and the materials from which it is made and will be signed and numbered by the individual crafts person. It will also guarantee the object is produced by a master craftsman at Sturt or by one of Sturt's Associate Craftsmen. Sturt Associate Craftsmen are leading craftsmen who in the opinion of Sturt represent the finest values in the Australian craft community, both in terms of their excellence in their craft and their contribution to the development of the crafts.

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Please complete all relevant sections of the accompanying order form and mail as soon as possible together with your cheque (or you may charge the full amount to your Bankcard) to:

Sturt Catalogue 1984
c/- Sturt Workshops
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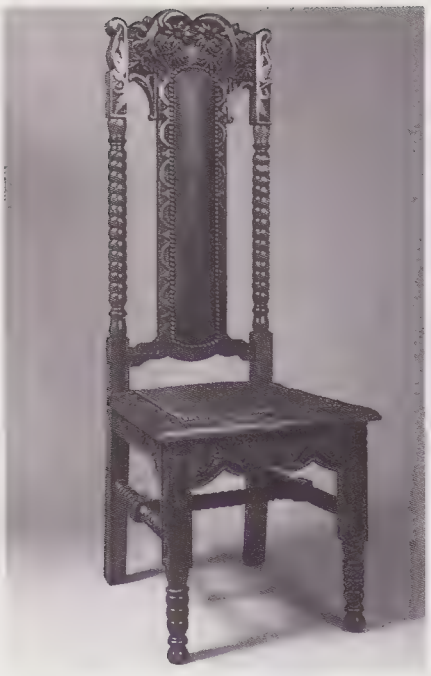
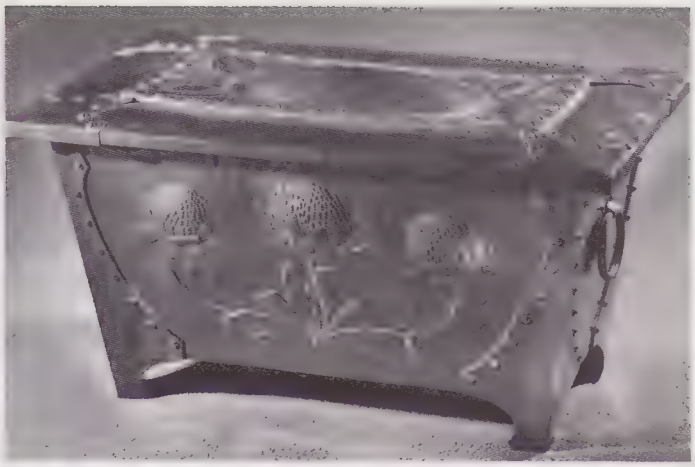




THE ROYAL MINT

AUSTRALIA'S DECORATIVE ARTS MUSEUM

Ann Berriman

THE Mint, as part of The Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences complex, presents a decorous colonial facade to the top end of Sydney's Macquarie Street.

The building with its sandstone and iron-bark pillared verandah was designed by Governor Macquarie — reputedly from a book of landscapes and buildings. First used as a hospital for convicts, then military staff offices, it became a mint in 1855. Now it is the museum of Australian decorative arts.

On entering The Mint, one steps back into the past. The twentieth century sounds of the street are cushioned by thick sandstone walls and windows draped in heavy Indian cotton or velvet, all neatly tied and tasselled. The dark floors reflect the tung-oiled timber, footsteps are softened by ornamental Brussels rugs of Persian design, while the eye falls on decorative arts, far removed from our present consciousness. The Museum uses a theme display which is quite effective in the comparatively small, shallow rooms. Peter Timms, the first Mint Museum curator commented:

To follow a theme in presentation is unusual; it was our biggest risk. I believe no other Australian museum has tried it. We will have major change-overs in exhibits from time to time, so there will always be something new to see.

One corridor on the lower floor is lined with coins, medallions, stamps and flags. The historical coin collection contains first fleet money, sovereigns, colonial minting, commemorative medallions and cheques, both real and counterfeit. As many banks and large companies printed money and cheques, counterfeiting was relatively easy. There is also a mysterious Arabic coin found in Australia but dated 1348 that somehow arrived before Captain Cook.

Australia's history can also be traced in the replicas of flags including the Murray River and the Eureka flags among those connected to political movements. The stamp collection reveals its own story. A revealing *vignette* is a respectful letter from Charles Kay, who having printed and gummed four thousand postage stamps at ninepence per thousand, asks for an increase in payment to one shilling. We don't know if the appeal was granted. Accompanying an 1850 advertisement, calling for tenders on producing top hats for letter carriers, is a small water-colour of an red-coated postman. Complete with gold braid, silk top hat, brass bell and leather bag he proffers a letter, demonstrating the dress and deferential demeanour suited to a carrier of Her Majesty's mail.

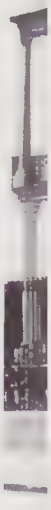
Australian flora and fauna abound, often taking bizarre forms as in a 1930 mosaic wall plaque depicting a kangaroo and emu rakishly wearing cricket caps, pedalling a bike in tandem while flannel flowers grace each corner of the picture.

Native fauna reaches its quirkiest interpretation in William Kerr's cricket trophy of a match in progress beneath a palm tree surrounded by emu eggs on silver stands; and its most absurd in ink-stands or teapot emu eggs elaborately engraved with an emu or kangaroo perched on top — colonial kitsch rampant.

Gum nuts, blossoms, waratah and flannel flowers appear on cups, saucers, plates, buttons and belts. In 1880 the Lithgow Pottery was making domestic ware with this decoration and later, brickmakers took up pottery and floral motifs burgeoned afresh. Pictures of flora and fauna were also sent to Japan and England for use on china and pottery for the Australian market. Alternatively articles were sent to be painted here.

Some of the best drawings of flora in The Mint were executed by the Frenchman Lucien Henry who wanted to promote the designs commercially in France, but died as he was returning to Europe. Also outstanding are the water-colours of Ellis Rowan, now widely recognised, and originally intended as botanical references. She continued her work in New Guinea and New Zealand.

Wood furniture also received its share of naturalistic imagery. The work was not always skilled, rather an



Decorative arts from
The Royal Mint collections
featuring Australian flora.

interpretation of the European style in an Australian way. It is possible to compare the workmanship between European and Australian-made clocks and pianos. The Australian piano's keyboard is curiously short by an octave!

Australian furniture maker John Mason filled his home with sofas and side-boards of great proportions, lavishly decorating them with native flora and fauna executed in marquetry and parquetry. A number of pieces are now in the Mint, set against William Morris wallpaper to recreate a drawing room of the times.

Clothing seemed to escape the application of Australian motifs as copies of garments were made from drawings depicting European styles. Yet the embroidered samplers and elaborate needlework reveal a diligent concern for detail as well as creative expression. They also expose the time scale of an era when women were expected to produce such work.

In this world of bell-pulls, sofas and straight-backed chairs, one is conscious of the inherent homesickness expressed in the need to be surrounded with *bibelots* and *desiderata* as charms against an alien land. The epitome of this sentiment is inherent in a large painting commemorating the first primrose grown in Australia. Painted in the Flemish manner with light falling on the primrose and women's faces bending over it, the nostalgia is palpable, bordering on religious fervour.

Dr. Lindsay Sharp, Director of the museum says he wants it to work for the people by showing the real world of the past. He also believes that science and art should not be divided.

I see the Mint as a traditional museum with the primary artifact the building itself. It contains easily identifiable and accessible artifacts which give a sense of inter-relationship — basically Australian decorative art with its preoccupation with native flora and fauna which is unique to Australia.

Museums used to be dusty, static, even dead emporia of esoteric mysteries. Now around the world, museums are beginning to come alive. They want to involve and question their visitors as well as explain, entertain and educate.

The Mint achieves its unity by creating a narrative from an applied arts perspective. Through the exhibits of 'primitive' surgical instruments, an early coin press, objects found in the building and the 'Midland' series of 'ship and shore' lithographs, flows the presence of the early settlers.

The Royal Mint's Australian collection ranges from Gold Fields' jewellery to pianos.

This pleasing sense of the past pervades The Mint's shaded rooms, each one offering an element of surprise in its eccentric collection that entertains and allows the pleasure of discovery.

While much of the interesting craftsmanship is hidden: the rich red of the roofing timbers marked with Roman numerals for easy positioning, the floor joists that use a whole gum tree, including bends, the inadequate foundations built on clay; it is possible to see the convict-made shutters cleverly concealed in the window casements and to have history revealed by a volunteer guide.

Making the transition from past to present craft, The Mint shop offers samplers for cross-stitching, flower presses, sachets, had-decorated writing paper, dolls and tea with the fragrance of eucalyptus, apple blossom or ti-tree. Replicas of love tokens the convicts exchanged as keepsakes and convict shirts stamped with the B.O. of the Board of Ordinance are tangible reminders of a realistic past. The pattern for the shirt is quite authentic as it was taken from one found between the floorboards of The Mint. A suitable offering from this most personal and intimate of museums.

The Macquarie Chair — A Well-Travelled Piece of History

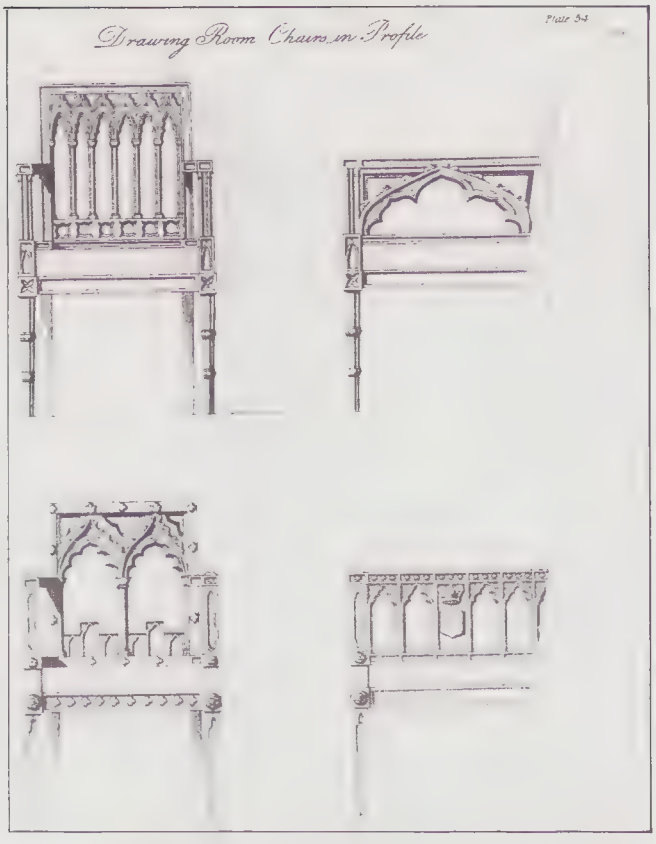
Ann Watson

CONSIDERING all of the Australian colonial furniture in the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences' Mint Museum collection, the 'Macquarie chair' has the honour of being the earliest, the most remarkable — and certainly the most well-travelled.

One of a pair, the chair was made for Major General Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales from 1810 to 1821. Each chair bears a rather incongruous carved representation of the Macquarie family crest of a raised arm with dagger. It is possible that both chairs were intended as State chairs for formal use by Governor Macquarie and his wife, Elizabeth at Government House, Sydney. They may even be the '2 large Arm Chairs' referred to in the inventory of the contents of the drawing room at Government House, compiled on 21 March, 1821. Alternatively, the chairs may have been presented as a farewell gesture to the Macquaries before their departure for England in February 1822.

Whatever their purpose we do know that both chairs were almost certainly made by the convicts William Temple and John Webster between late 1820 and early 1822.

Armchair, H 131 x W 70.3 x *D* 58.4 cm, Rose Mahogany (*Dysoxylon fraseranum*) with she-oak (*Casuarina sp.*) panels; Eastern Grey wallaby skin upholstery (recent replacement). Attributed to John Webster and William Temple, Sydney 1821, one of a pair made for Governor and Mrs. Macquarie. Presented by the Vancouver Museum, Canada, 1961 (MAAS/H6862). Collection: Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences (Mint Museum).



Designs for Gothic Chairs.
Plates 54 and 57 from George Smith's *A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture*, London, 1808.

Those well-acquainted with the frustrations of trying to document early colonial furniture from the scant surviving records, will know that such precision is indeed rare. In the case of the Macquarie chair, however, we do have some very useful clues.

Firstly, the attribution. In addition to the two Macquarie chairs (the second is now the Chancellor's Chair, Macquarie University) there is a third chair. Remarkably similar in style and construction, this example is now located in St. James' Church, Queen's Square, Sydney and originally belonged to Thomas Hobbes Scott. It very conveniently carries a small panel carved with the inscription, 'Temple and Webster, New South Wales, 1821'. Scott's first trip to the colony was as the Secretary to Commissioner J.T. Bigge from October 1819 to February 1821. Presumably the chair was acquired on this first trip, before Scott's second sojourn as Sydney's first Archdeacon from 1825.

The two Macquarie chairs can also be dated to 1821. We know that the Macquaries took both chairs with them when they left for England in February 1822. We also know that John Webster, a carver and gilder, is recorded in the 1828 Census as having arrived in the colony on 7 August 1820 on board the 'Mangles' to serve a 14 year sentence. William Temple is listed in the same census as a carpenter at Parramatta who arrived in New South Wales in 1813 to serve a life sentence. The Macquarie chairs could only have been made, therefore, between the date of Webster's arrival in Sydney in August 1820 and the time of the Macquaries' departure in February 1822. A date of 1821 for the chairs would seem reasonable.

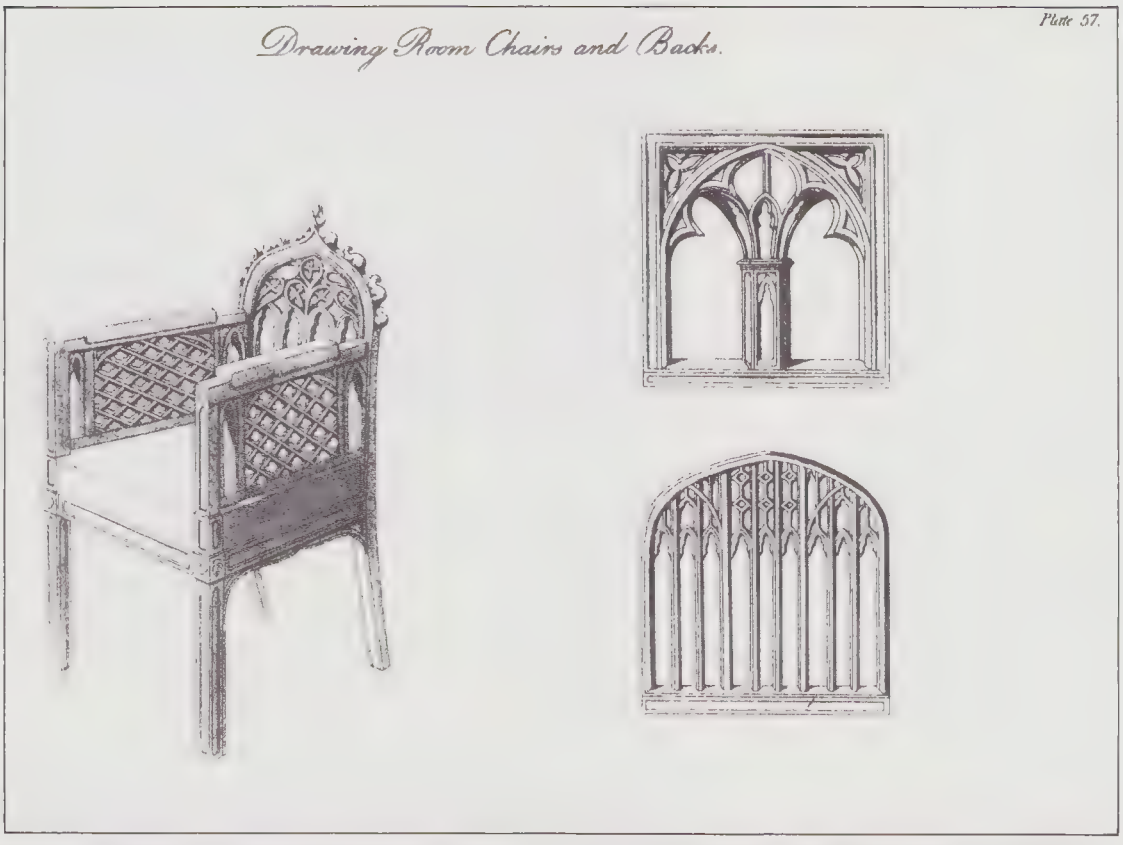
Having left with the Macquaries in 1822 the Museum's chair, by a series of fortuitous circumstances, reappeared in Australia almost 140 years later when it was acquired by the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences in 1961. What happened to it in the intervening years is conjectural, but we do have a few hard facts as well as a few clues.

While Macquarie University's chair remained with Macquarie family descendants in Scotland until it was presented to the University in 1967, the Museum's chair led a somewhat more chequered existence. The first documented sighting outside Scotland occurred in 1945 when an Australian airman notified the Victorian Public Library he had seen the chair in the Vancouver Museum, Canada. A request for more details from the Library elicited the information that the chair had been loaned to the Vancouver Museum by a 'Mrs. R. Macquarrie', last heard of in 1937.

Nothing seems to have come of these investigations until in 1959 a Mrs. Ashby, recently returned from Canada, notified the Director of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences that she too had seen the chair in the Vancouver Museum — and that there had been some interest expressed in returning it to Australia. Negotiations began afresh and by July 1961 the chair was back in its native land, firmly in the possession of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. One wonders if 'Mrs. R. Macquarrie', last heard of in 1937, was ever able to be contacted about the chair's new home. While we know nothing of her whereabouts after 1937, we do know that she was in some way related to one Archibald Macquarie, grand nephew of Lachlan Macquarie and reputed to have settled in Canada between 1915 and 1919.

The chair arrived in Sydney in 1961 in reasonably good order and with what would appear to have been the remains of its original kangaroo skin upholstery. This has since been replaced and damage to the woodwork repaired.

The construction and style of the chair is in itself of much interest. It is made almost entirely of rose mahogany or rosewood (*Dysoxylon fraseranum*). Rose mahogany is perhaps a less confusing common name for this native timber, though referred to in early records as rosewood, bears little resemblance to the Brazilian or East Indian timbers of the same name. Rose mahogany was found on the north coast of New South Wales with particular concentrations around the Hunter River area. It seems to have been most popular as a cabinet timber during Macquarie's time, first mentioned as being cut in the Newcastle district in 1810. Patrick Reilly, a carpenter giving evidence before Commissioner Bigge in 1821, stated that rosewood 'is very good for fine furniture and for veneering as well as turning. Good bedposts are made of it'. (Bigge Report, Bonwick Transcripts, Box 5, p. 2273). Rarely used for furniture made after about



1825, one suspects that rose mahogany was almost entirely cut out of Newcastle coastal areas by this date. Today it can still be found growing on the north coast of New South Wales and southern Queensland.

In addition to rose mahogany, the legs, seat rails and uprights of the chair are veneered with panels of she-oak (*Casuarina sp.*). Variously known as she-oak, beefwood and Botany Bay wood, *Casuarina* grew abundantly in the Sydney area and was in use from the earliest years of settlement. Its distinctive markings made it particularly suitable for veneering and crossbanding and around the turn of the 18th century it was exported in some quantity to England. *Casuarina* veneered furniture, especially tea caddies, of English origin still appear on the market from time to time. After the mid 1820s it was rarely used for cabinet work, being superseded by the more popular red cedar (*Toona australis*)

Like much 19th century furniture the Macquarie chair was not immune to that century's taste for style revivals. The chair is carved in the Gothic style with crocketed, spire-like finials and a cusped ogee arch to the upper back, pierced quatrefoils to the lower back and blank Gothic tracery to the legs, seat rails and uprights. Such decorative embellishments were directly derived from, and inspired by, medieval Gothic architecture.

Governor and Mrs. Macquarie's own taste for the Gothic style had already been exhibited in a number of building projects they initiated. Of these, the Government House stables (now the New South Wales Conservatorium of Music) survive as a testament to the picturesque Gothic style of which they were so fond. It is not surprising then that the chairs designed for them (and possibly intended for their never-realised Gothic style government house) incorporated strongly Gothic features. What is surprising is the sophistication of the chairs and the quality of their carving.

The Macquarie chairs are the earliest known examples of colonial Gothic furniture in Australia. Of the small number of documented pieces of colonial furniture surviving from the pre 1825 period most either show the continuing influence of Sheraton (square tapering legs, string inlays, metal handles, etc.) or the classical lines of the Regency style fashionable in the first two decades of the 19th century.

Where then did the Gothic inspiration for the Macquarie chairs spring from? Gothic became fashionable as an architectural style during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, but was comparatively rare in furniture until the late 1830s. Consequently there was no great body of Gothic style furniture from which the chairs could have been copied. There was, however, an important pattern book: George Smith's **A Collection of Designs for Household Furniture**, published in 1808, was the first of its kind to include a comprehensive range of Gothic furniture designs. Smith's pattern book was one of the most popular and influential of the Regency period and it is not inconceivable that the Macquaries were in possession of a copy. As a carver and gilder, the convict John Webster may also have been well-acquainted with the pattern book before his transportation to Australia in 1820.

If George Smith's pattern book was used, however, it was as a source of reference and inspriation only, for while a number of the chair's details are similar to those shown in the pattern book the overall design — the finials, upholstered back and side panels and curved armrests — has no close precedent in Smith's drawings.

No doubt Gothic was chosen as the decorative 'theme' for the chairs because of its formal qualities and grand and romantic associations. Whether this was a consciously fashionable adaptation from a contemporary source or a more direct attempt to emulate medieval ecclesiastical chairs we will probably never know. What we can be certain of is that the chairs were clearly intended to reflect the ideals and aspirations of Macquarie — and perhaps the developing colony he so actively governed.

We can also be sure that Governor Macquarie would be gratified to know that his chair is presently on display in the Mint, built by him as a 'Rum' Hospital (1811–1817) and now a public monument to his activities in Australia.

Ann Watson is the Curator of Furniture and Woodwork at the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.

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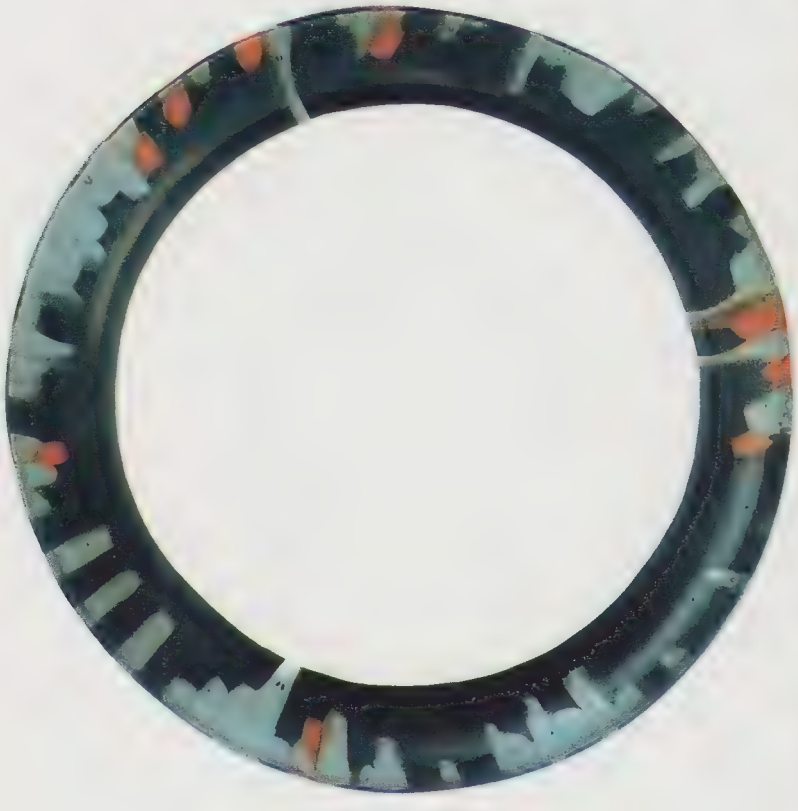

Mazza Rijsdijk. *Bangle*, Mosaic glass.

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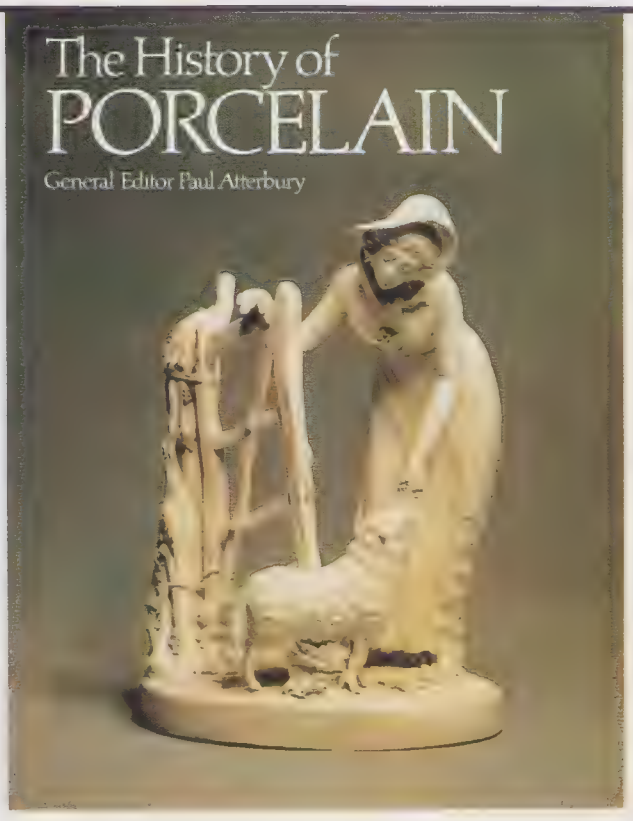

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TORI de MESTRE

A VISUAL BIOGRAPHY

Anna Griffiths

1. *Sample Bag*, 33 × 33 cms. Organza, cotton, beads, buttons, bracken. 1983. Photo, Tony Boyd.

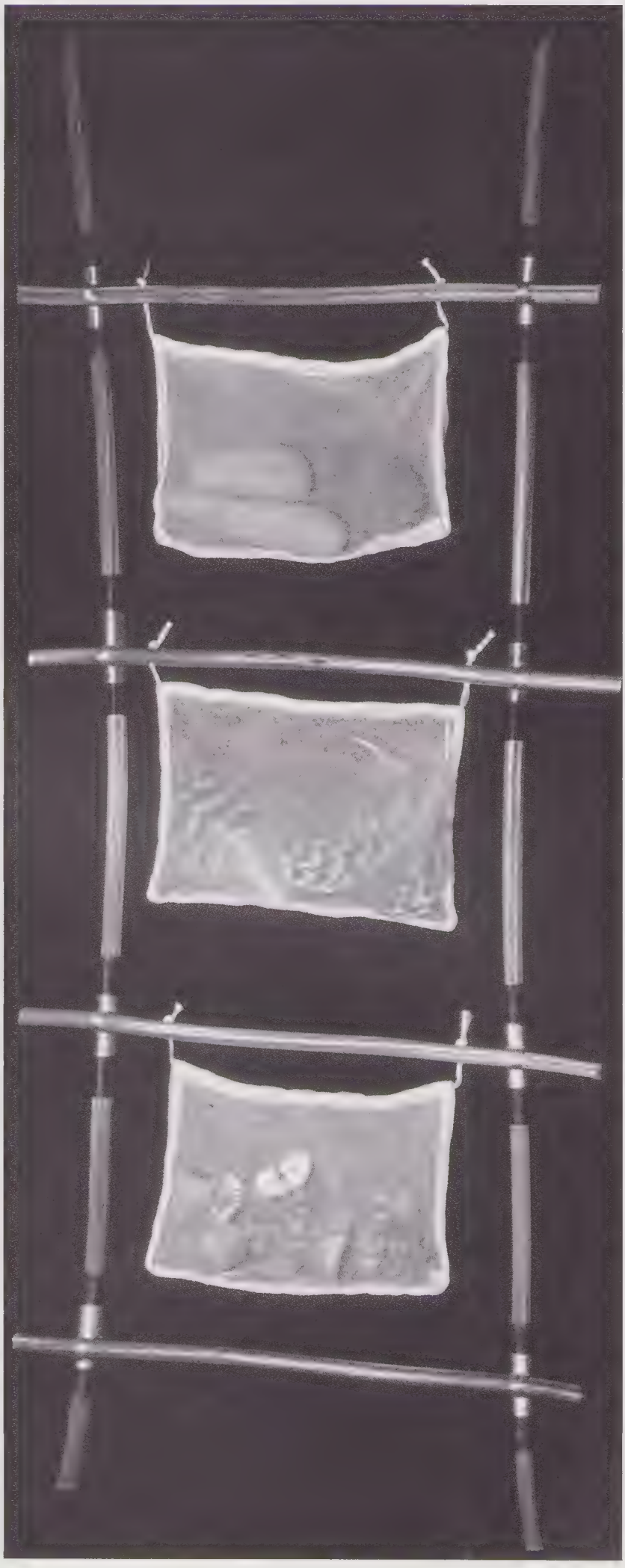
2. *Natural Collections*, 58 × 24 cms. Organza, cotton, feathers, seeds, rocks, bracken. 1983. Photo, Tony Boyd.

If the work of fibre artist Tori de Mestre is seen as a sort of visual autobiography, one must wonder at the energy that caused the exploration of constantly new directions during the eight or so years since she abandoned painting and the symbols and themes which constantly guide each episode; preventing changes in style, subject and approach from being merely disjointed events.

Born in Wollongong in 1951, Tori studied painting for three years at the National Art School in Sydney before moving to Victoria. It was while studying at Melbourne State College that she became interested in textiles. Her first experiments were three-dimensional needlepoint birds decorated with feathers and, although much ground has been covered since, these first pieces embody the influences consistent in her work: her childhood on a farm in the Illawarra district of NSW, the ideas and work of her mother, a sculptor; and the Sydney art world.

Tori's themes have oscillated between the country and the city, Australia and overseas, interiors and exteriors, broad spaces and small, but birds and feathers recur and two-dimensional approaches vie for importance with three.

Two-dimensional appliques, formally stretched into squares or rectangles seem logical formats for a former painter to adopt and from 1979 to 1982 Tori's work drew its inspiration from patterned fabrics. Though figurative, these works were explorations of fabric patterns and colours rather than subjects. The fabric was always allowed to speak for itself, thus avoiding contrivance. From this period came a charming series entitled 'Rooms I have lived in' exhibited at the Craft Centre, South Yarra. The sense of pattern is as obvious as that of Bonnard and Matisse but the patterns are pre-made rather than



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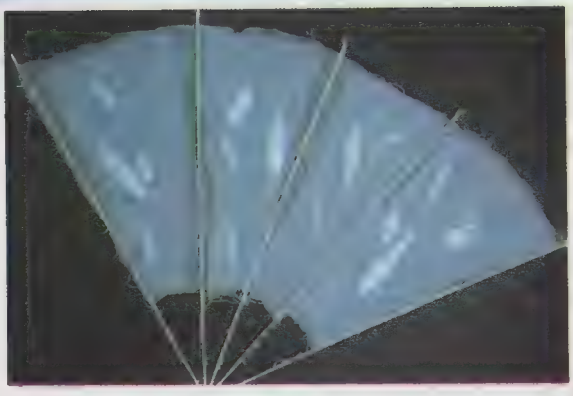

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3. *Ephemera*, 100 × 150 cms. Organza, cotton, bracken. 1983. Photo, Sally Abbott-Smith.

4. *Cockatoo Coquette detail*. Organza, wood, feathers. 1984.

5. *Dance Spirit*, 70 × 48 × 24 cms. Bracken, feathers, cotton. 1983.

6. Corpus Christi Chapel, Victoria. 500 × 300 cms. Dyed silks.

7. Corpus Christi detail.

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8. *Devastation/ Regeneration*, 250 × 160 cms. Organza, cotton, bracken. 1983. Photo, Sally Abbott-Smith.

9. *Devastation/ Regeneration* detail.

10. *Black and White Selection*, 37 × 38 cms. Organza, cotton, bracken. 1983. Photo, Tony Boyd.

11. *Untitled*, 13 × 13 cms. River stone, cotton, bracken. 1983. Photo, Tony Boyd.

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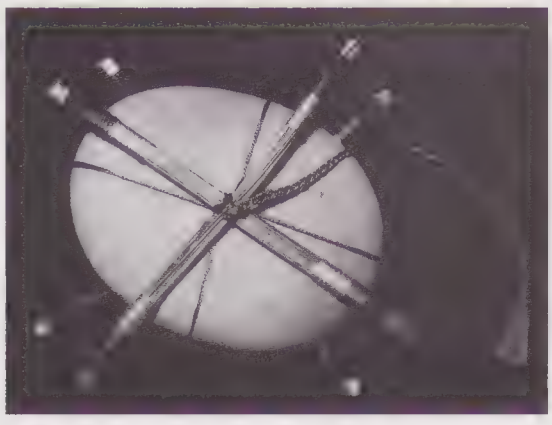

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reproduced. There is a strong sense of contrast between interior and exterior views within the one picture — from the inside, with its vertical patterns and subdued hues, through a window to a scene which is predominantly horizontal and brightly coloured. These pictures are forceful responses to different and new visual stimuli.

Tori's latest work takes new directions originating from her interest in John Davis's sculpture, Japanese gardens, and her visits to the Solomon Islands. The unifying theme here between these factors is a certain minimalism in the use of simple natural objects and materials that Tori has incorporated in her early three-dimensional works with their areas of tight coloured wrapping. These recent works are both flat and sculptural, but they rely on fabric and thread variously supported by dyed cane, natural sticks sometimes forming grids, sometimes self-supporting. Sticks, stones and feathers are wrapped and interdependent.

A series entitled 'Collections' gathers precious objects and fragments together and sorts them into small organza bags which themselves are arranged into patterns: black and white scraps, feathers, natural objects and fabric trimmings.

Tori does not like to speculate on where her next path will lead. She does not feel the need to explore fabric crafts because commercial colours and patterns provide more than enough ideas. She values the limitations set by known techniques and readily available materials, using her sewing machine for construction rather than embellishment. A little padding and some handstitching and painting complete her vocabulary.

Discussing fabric crafts led us into one of those never-completed discussions on art vs craft. Tori believes that the artist works essentially through his/her ideas and designs, using whatever media are available and understood: the craftsman depends more on technique and media, perhaps subjecting ideas and design. But she sees such categories as unsatisfying and prefers not to be identified with either category.

Tori de Mestre's work is eclectic and energetic, moving rapidly through ideas and concepts, responding to changing experience and stimuli.

Perhaps her birds are her own personal symbols.

Through the Back Door — Work In Paper

by Gaynor Cardew

Nola Anderson

GAYNOR Cardew offers us life caught from behind, the surreptitious peek, distanced by wit and personal mythology.

Cardew is a Canberra artist working in graphics and hand-made paper. Cast paper, flat paper construction, drawing, mixed media and an endless variety of rolled, twisted, moulded and manipulated fibre provide the vocabulary. A dual emphasis on form and graphics and an ability to symbolise personal reality as public story, provide the strength and individuality.

In 1977 Cardew graduated from the Canberra School of Art with a major in sculpture and drawing and in the following years developed the paper casting technique that has continued to feature in her work to date. Early experiments in 1978 produced a series of 'reconstructed' trees in paper for a group exhibition at the Arts Council in Canberra.

These trees were based upon a series of ironies. They were made by constructing paper casts around selected trees in a local Canberra forest. The casts were then left to dry for about three months, during which time they assumed the dirt and stains of their bush environment. First irony: the paper used for wrapping was recycled computer paper, discarded technology goes back to the forest womb.

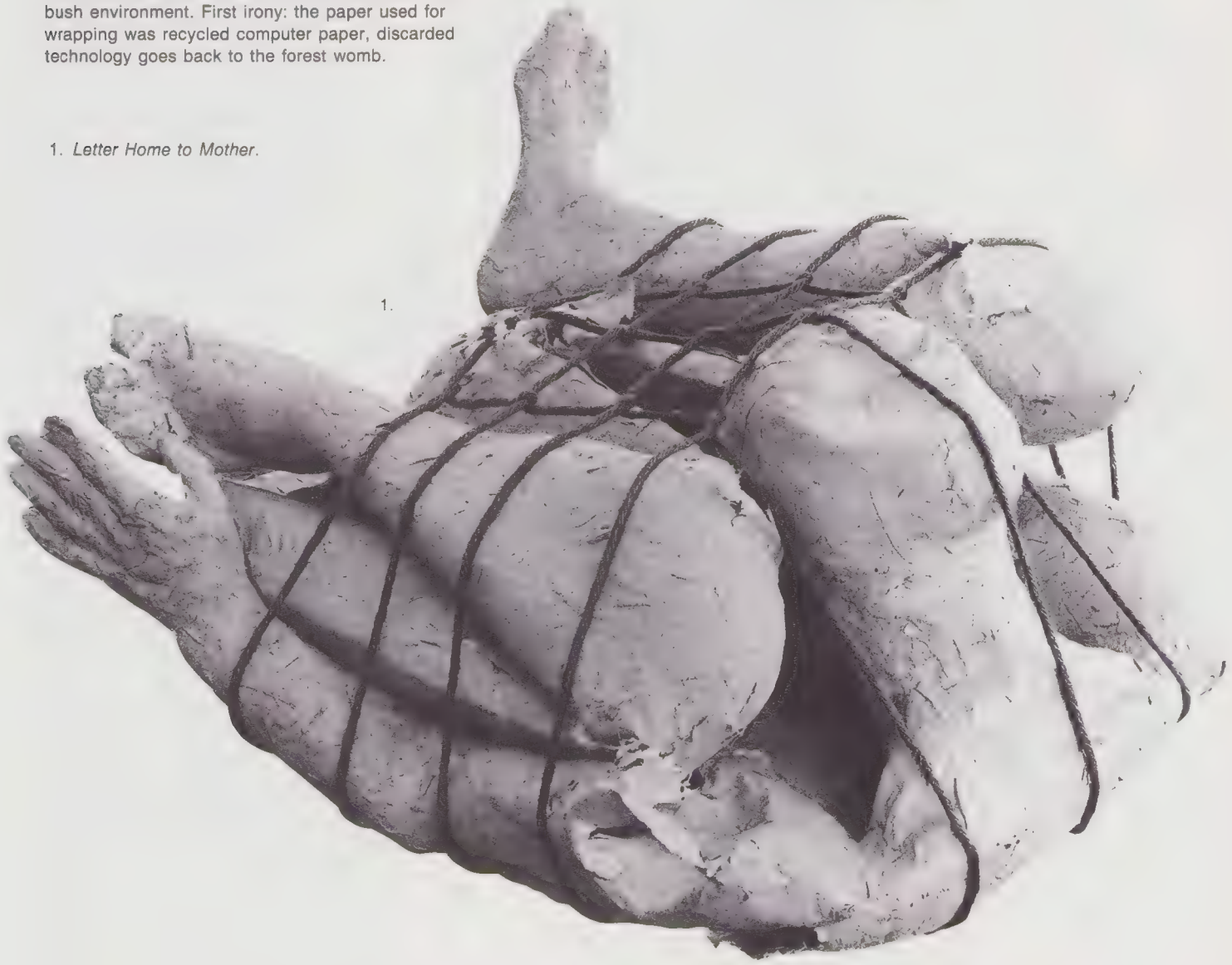
Once the casts were dry, Cardew removed them and mounted them as a gallery installation. Second irony: the reconstructed forest is removed to a public environment, and tagged as art by association.

Cardew's command of ironies, sometimes delicate, sometimes brick-like, has continued to be a major feature in her work. At the same time her considered and rigorous personal philosophy saves that work from cheap thrills. It is a mistake to regard the work as too witty to be serious.

Star billing in her philosophy goes to the story. Everybody enjoys a well told anecdote and Cardew's work is full of them. The strength comes from both the personal inspiration behind the anecdote and its transformation into a symbol the observer can pin his own experiences and memories on.

'Grandma's Toys' is a good example. The work is a series of 16 tall rectangular, lidded boxes, placed together to form a square. Nothing can be seen from the outside, the viewer must ask questions to begin the story, the lids must be removed to see inside.

1. *Letter Home to Mother.*



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2. Capa and Cardew (joint project). *Garments* — Chinese silk, linen, banana paper.

3. Capa and Cardew (joint project).

4. *Figures in the Canberra Landscape*. Lesley Goldacre and Gaynor Cardew. Photo, Lesley Goldacre.

5. Capa and Cardew (joint project).

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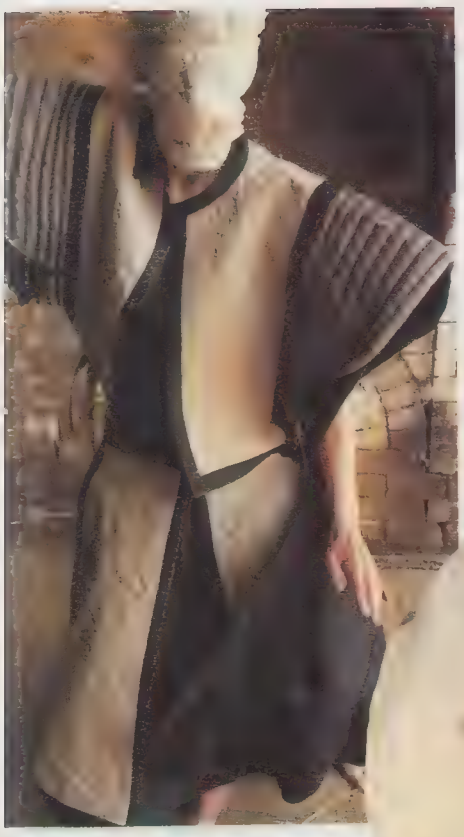

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6. *Canberra Fowl*. Handmade paper.

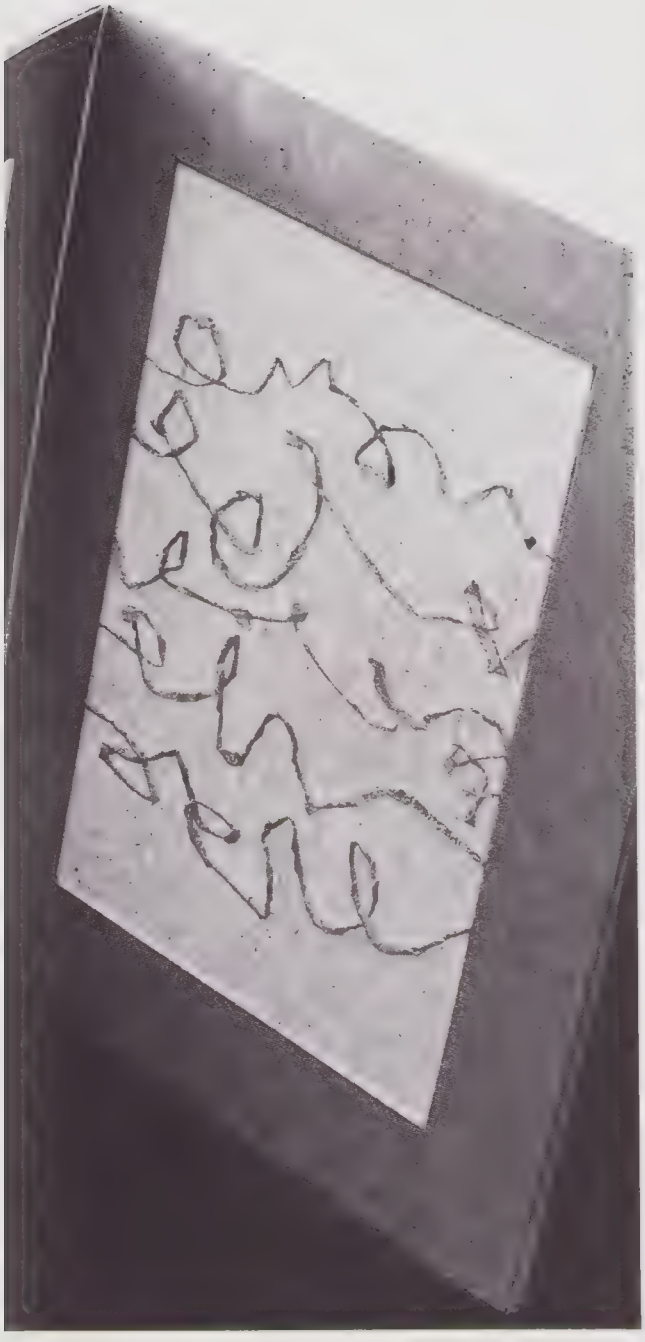
7. *Japanese Love Letter*. Handmade paper.

All photographs are by Gaynor Cardew unless otherwise noted.

Each box contains a small object attached to the lid which pulls out the treasure as it is lifted.

The objects inside are 'Grandma's Toys', tiny bowerbird trinkets that chidren would use as toys; buttons, feathers, pieces of glass, twigs made into fairies, bits of string and the inevitable marbles. Their transformation into message and symbol is effected by their complete familiarity to anyone who has made his or her own toys during childhood, and by their relocation to this contructed environment.

There is another, less accessible, story in 'Japanese Love Letter', a small folding paper screen made from transparent Japanese paper. Spidery scrawls of twisted paper wind their way from one screen to the next. There is a message but this time it is concealed in the twisted remains of the letter. Our human curiosity to unearth a forbidden secret is delicately manipulated.



Not all Cardew's images are as pleasantly melancholy. The 'Gallery Book' carries a harsher message although the viewer is introduced to it discreetly through the back door. The book is rather like a child's pop-up book and each page features a slightly flattened though three-dimensional portion of a human body. Each page turned introduces more body parts, until we discover the whole book is one complete figure, flattened and dissected into pages, categorized and locked safely away. The last page: two hanging feet, swinging free; the feet of a dead man, hanging at the gallows. The game is finished but the message is stronger for the deception.

A discussion of Cardew's work would not be complete without reference to her use of graphics as a medium by itself and in combination with sculpture. Cardew's graphics have the economy of the hieroglyph and by using graphic symbols, she draws the personal image into the public arena.

Her series of two books, 'Canberra Foul' and 'Canberra Fowl', use graphics to tell a story that, at least in 'Canberra Foul', resembles the Gallery Book in its slow movement from play to tragedy. By using a process of implanting papers, Cardew sets the black silhouettes of local birds against the white pages of the book. At first the beauty and economy of the drawings commands complete attention. As the pages are turned the economy becomes extreme, parts or suggestions of birds are given, the poses are awkward, the images flattened. They become symbols of small pathetic feathered carcasses that attest the tyranny of suburban roads.

Cardew's interest in graphics has recently developed into an exploration of what she considers to be a much more direct means of communication — that of cartoons. In these works, earlier themes of human vulnerability, its pathos and fragility, have sharpened into a more rigorous examination of the human condition. While the text of these cartoons can be cruelly sarcastic, her characters maintain some of the former whimsy and manage to elicit some sympathy, if only in response to their utterly dejected manner.

The diversity in Cardew's work has grown from her willingness to experiment with the medium. This has also led to some joint ventures such as 'Figures in a Canberra Landscape', a work by Cardew and photographer Lesley Goldacre, and a series of garments under the name Capa and Cardew. The latter were designed by Dorothy Herel, with the assistance of Paulee Pratten, and combined Cardew's paper with Chinese silk and linen to produce two garments with a distinctive oriental mood.

Seeing Cardew's work whets the appetite for more, partly because it satisfies the insatiable human appetite for self recognition, and partly because she is in the business of communicating and does so with astonishing accuracy. Her work is as much about that message as it is about the object that carries it with a sharp two-edged whimsy.

Figures in the Canberra Landscape
Lesley Goldacre and Gaynor Cardew
Photo: Lesley Goldacre.

Second Biennial Acquisitive Exhibition — Miniature Textiles

Jeanne Keefer

As a matter of policy, the Ararat Art Gallery in Victoria collects and exhibits contemporary fibre and textiles. Following its successful inaugural Biennial Acquisitive Exhibition of Miniature Textiles in 1981, a second Miniatures exhibition was mounted in late 1983. Subsequently, works acquired by the Gallery from both exhibitions toured a number of venues, including the Meat Market Craft Centre in Melbourne.

The British International Exhibitions of Miniature Textiles (of which the Fourth toured Australia in 1982-83) provided a reference to mount the Ararat exhibitions. This concept defines 'miniature' as a limit of 20 cm. in any direction. Initially, this was a reactionary exhibition in response to the well established Lausanne Biennial with its minimum of five square metres of textile. Since its inception in 1974, the British exhibition has become an institution and now provides a generally accepted international standard of miniature in textiles. This progression of the concept, from introduction to establishment, parallels that of most movements in the arts.

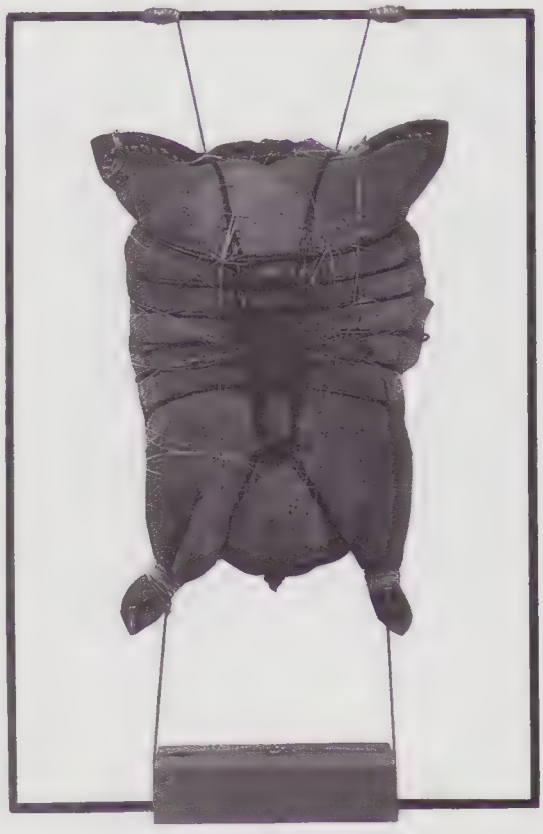
One must not assume that works and exhibitions where the physical descriptions appear identical stem from coincident responses and concerns. There are valid reasons for mounting a miniature textiles exhibition in Australia, different from the British but intrinsically responsive to the Australian situation. There are two significant factors, aesthetics and economics, that determine how the work is made and exhibited.

There are a number of aesthetic reasons why one would choose to work in miniature. For some, intimacy of scale is a primary concern and all work develops within that context. For others, there is a challenge in shifting scale from a large size to a relatively small one. Of necessity, this entails a reassessment of ideas and their articulation. Scale can often be related to the use of time as many fibre processes are inherently time consuming, and ideas may be addressed at a much quicker pace if the scale is small.

In addition to time, cost can be a determining factor. Naturally, large works are more costly and shipping sizeable pieces is prohibitively expensive.

Currently, an art-based textile movement is appearing in Australia. This is distinct from the process-based craft orientation usually directed towards functionalism. Increasingly, as in most traditional 'craft' media, one finds practitioners whose concern is the articulation of a specific idea rather than addressing historical conventions of use. This movement invokes endless argument, commendation and detraction. However, it is primarily from these artist/craftsmen that the miniature textile work is drawn. It is interesting to note while there are functional textile works which could fit within the size limitations of this exhibition, they were not represented. Was this the choice of the makers or the selectors? Whatever their motivation or rationale however, one must address the success or failure of the individual works. What determines a successful miniature textile?

Two factors are important; cohesion and articulation. The most satisfactory work is harmonious, the relative internal scale of the elements in proportion. This requires an acute sensitivity to forms and great facility in assembling them.



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A clearly defined concept is also essential. A miniature might be compared to a poem that must articulate its message in a clarified manner: in comparison to a novel that has room to add additional interesting information. This need for a distillation of ideas does not mean that the work is necessarily simple, unadorned or serious (though it may well be). For example, one of the most delightful pieces was a whimsical calico carousel by Kerry Gavin, all colour and pattern and beads. In contrast, Elsje King's 'Soft Corners', white woven cotton set in white felted wool, was a piece of austere eloquence.

There is simply no room for error in the successful miniature textile. Idea and execution are inextricably joined. The scale invites intimate scrutiny, under which the accuracy of techniques or judgements quickly becomes apparent.

Other notable works in the exhibition included Lise Cruickshank's 'Miniature Tapestry', Rosemary Burke's 'Offerings', Tony Dyer's 'Resting Place', Beverly Rae's

1. Beverly Rae. *Rib Cage*. Mixed Media, stuffed, wrapped and stitched.
2. Kerry Gavin. *Tiny Circus*. Embroidery, beads, paint.
3. Tony Dyer. *Resting Place*. Silk, wood, cane, batik.
4. Rosemary Burke. *Offerings*. Bones, bamboo, wrapped fabrics.
5. David Green. *Where Do Beetles Come From?* Mixed media.
6. Elsje King. *Soft Corners*. Woven cotton set into wool.
7. Lise Cruickshank. *Miniature Tapestry*. Gobelin silk, cotton.

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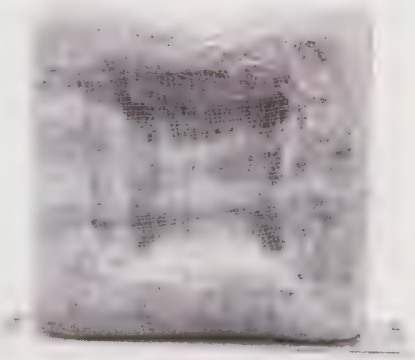

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'Rib Cage', and David Green's 'Where do Beetles Come From?'

Lise Cruickshank's work used silk and cotton in a tiny Gobelin tapestry. The imagery was suggestive of contemporary abstract expressionist painting with floating, patterned shapes.

Rosemary Burke's 'Offerings', was an object assembled from wrapped fabric forms, bones and bamboo. Her work is invariably small scale, involving gathering, wrapping and enclosing objects ranging from bones to hair to irridescent beetles. This piece had a sense of ceremonial offering; a presentation whose essence was suggested but indefined.

Tony Dyer is known for his large scale batiks. His 'Resting Place' was a small, filled bag of batiked silk lying on a painted wooden base that had been shaped to receive it. The colours, forms and markings had a number of references without being specific. It was an intriguingly evocative piece.

Beverly Rae's work was multidisciplinary, evidencing a knowledge of both fibre and metal. Her 'Rib Cage', an object/sculpture, was a stuffed, bound form, tensely strung into a steel frame. Her sense of proportion, sensitivity to the various materials and technical facility combined to make a most satisfactory work.

David Green's approach was graphic. His mixed media collage, 'Where do Beetles Come From?' used paper, paint, fibre and writing, carefully matted and framed. The work had an immediately identifiable character and a spontaneity that came from a complete familiarity with the materials.

Overall, the exhibition was of a good standard, representative of some of the best contemporary work in fibre. For small regional galleries like Ararat to mount such significant exhibitions is commendable. It was a worthy effort and one that should be encouraged. The future development of fibre and textiles in Australia will be interesting to watch.

Australian Crafts 1984 Annual Stocktake of Style

Jenny Zimmer

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EVER since it was inaugurated, the annual *Australian Crafts* exhibition at Melbourne's Meat Market Craft Centre has suffered the criticism of those who question the wisdom of continuing it.

The fact that the exhibition hall was crowded each day it was open, a high proportion of the works were sold, and a great section of the general public were able to test their responses to the craft community's latest offerings, meant little to those who simply dismissed it as *more of the same* and those who, like Barry Cooper in the June issue of **Crafts Victoria**, voiced his more complex complaints. He suggested that it was a marketing exercise, directed at the *baubles and gift shoppe* end of the spectrum; it was didactic — setting up a range of masters to be followed by a retinue of experimenters and supporters; and it was a battle-ground between the good, the traditional and the rightfully utilitarian against their enemy, the artistic interlopers who dare to expose some *ego*.

Mind you, the same critic does not seem clear about whether he thinks all or any of these observations to be good or bad. He proclaims, with thorough-going dogmatism, crafts are a utilitarian domain, yet he praises (in selected instances) self expression. He exhorts truth to materials and techniques, yet he accepts *fashions*. He decides, on his own thoroughly subjective grounds, what constitutes honesty or pretence in the craft object. What sort of an exhibition could it be that it generated such muddle and confusion?

The organisers do not deny the show is meant to develop and shape a market for the crafts — nor do they exclude creative form and imagery from the domain of the crafts. So we can dismiss these criticisms as falling on fallow ground.

What seems more pertinent amongst the organiser's stated aims is the desire to 'reflect the state of contemporary Australian craft for the instruction of the very large craft interested public'. No matter how the inner craft coterie reacts to the annual show, and no matter how the critics under- or over-estimate its components, this is what it does. And it is for this aim that it should be praised and sustained. Herein lies its major value: it defines the subtle shifts of taste, the fickle nature of fashion and the delicate edge of acceptable craftsmanship in a context which otherwise would remain elusive and impossible to discern. My remarks, therefore, will be made within contexts that have become clear as a result of these annual nation-wide exhibitions and the 1984 show in particular.

Before launching into my remarks, it may be necessary to provide a little more information about the organisation of the show. It was originally established in 1980 to mark the centenary of the Meat Market building, opened officially as a craft centre in 1979. The annual exhibition was conceived from the beginning on an ambitious scale. It was a generous gesture towards a rapidly growing and rather self-conscious craft community. The first exhibition, like the subsequent ones, stretched the resources of the Meat Market to the full. The conditions for exhibiting and the management of selection procedures have improved year by year as more resources and expertise accrued.

The idealistic aim of this annual national event, opening just prior to Easter each year, is 'to reflect the state of contemporary Australian craft for the instruction of a very large craft interested public, to increase appreciation of fine craftsmanship, good design and creative form and imagery and to assist Australian craftspeople by the promotion and sale of their work'. Unfortunately the craftspeople do not always reciprocate in the spirit they might or that the organisers deserve.

Last year some craftspeople, rather than expending effort to exhibit their latest and best works, delivered items left over from commercial exhibitions or submitted work which had become tired, stereotyped and repetitious. Such behaviour indicated a level of disinterest and self-satisfaction that made a mockery of the Meat Market's intentions and raised serious doubts as to the artistic integrity and generosity of the individuals concerned.

Possibly in response to the uneven quality of some of the works submitted by invited craftspeople, and as a result of queries over the constitution of the invitation list, the management introduced a jury system for the selection of the 1984 exhibition. Advertisements placed in the daily press drew the initial submissions of colour slides. Six juries made up of qualified persons from each of the crafts areas then selected the craftspeople to be represented. Eventually one hundred and fifty two people submitted two hundred and fifty four works for exhibition. The juries did,

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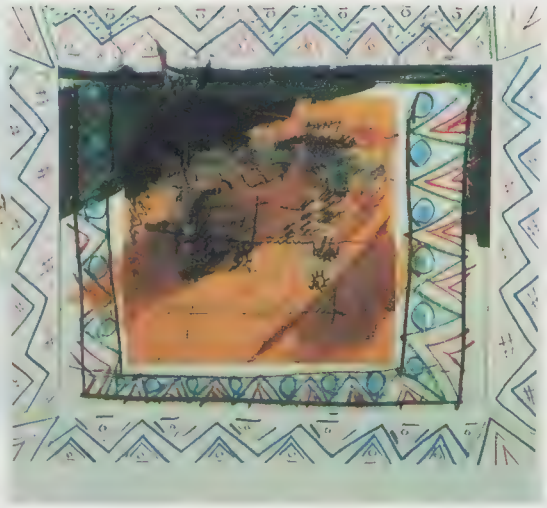
At the moment, crafts are stylish — not crafty



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indeed, find previously unknown craftspeople whose works gave the 1984 show a certain liveliness and freshness in contrast to what was becoming a somewhat predictable array.

Previous exhibitions have, nevertheless, identified the flux and flow of dominant attitudes. Earlier it was posible to see the revival of *Australiana* and the growing predilection to see craft as art. Last year one could readily discern the arrival of a colourful, sometimes crude but exciting mode created in response to new wave music and fashion. It was particularly noticeable in the fibre arts and ceramics.

This year we have witnessed the blossoming of the oriental vogue. Long dormant in the ceramics area, it has now affected fibre. The new wave style has now moved firmly into the jewellery area and the leather and is well entrenched in ceramics — although several of last year's stars have been unable to sustain the momentum or, like Andrew Cadzow, have gone oriental. The virulent move towards craft as art, or self-expression, seems to have decelerated or rationalized to better fit the other requirements of fine crafts. *Australiana* is almost a spent force. At the moment crafts are stylish — not crafty.

The Oriental/Exotic Mode (Ascending)

The oriental influence was most noticeable in the fibre area. Nola Firth's *Ikat II*, of indigo dyed cotton, appeared to simply and artistically reproduce its Japanese models while Kathy Berney's *Reversible Silk Coats* were attractive but not nearly as suave as their Japanese counterparts. These items were inspired, no doubt, by the current Japanese fashion cult. But the hand crafted fashion goods, despite the modish labels they now bear, are seldom *haute couture* — they often suffer at least some of the problems of home-made clothes and insist on making a virtue of such problems.

More successful was Paula Hyland's translation of the forms and colours of Chinese silk embroidery into that new/old primary school craft of stitching in wool on hessian. Her *Garden of Flowers* and *Sea of Flowers* were delightfully feminine, and an inventive variation on the traditional. Very successful too was Tori de Mestre's *Seven-Seven* — an arrangement of bound straw bundles — and her *Devastation-Regeneration* which was assembled from twigs stitched to gauze overlays and created a delicately aesthetic solution.

Robyn Gordon's *Dappled Harmony* — a necklace assembled from spotted lolly-like dollops of plastic compound, glass beads and plastic thread took me immediately back to Cairo's *Khan Khaliki* Bazaar while her *Harmony and Counterpoint*, another necklace, exploited abstract design and muted greys to almost evoke an Aboriginal presence.

Victoria Howlett's ceramics play with oriental motifs in a way that could, if she is not careful, border on *pastiche*. She is sometimes a little too literal in her borrowings. *Blossoms/Slab* is, nonetheless, an attractive piece. Other works exploiting an oriental aspect included Gwyn Pigott's classical *Porcelain Bowl* with cracked glaze and Peter Crisp's small slumped glass bowl with gold threads. Both are lovely objects.

I predict that the oriental influence will be even stronger in future. It provides a vast reservoir of decorative motifs ans stylistic directions that has only just begun to be tapped. Increased travel to the orient and the strengthening of trade and cultural ties can only accelerate the effects on the crafts as a whole.

New Wave (Descending)

The new wave neo-expressionist tendency noted in the ceramics and fibre areas last year has survived the interim with mixed success. Andrew Cadzow has defected to black-ware with orientalizing aspects while Guiseppe Raneri has almost but not quite lapsed into the poor taste he brilliantly avoided previously. Their trail-blazing last year has been taken up by Carolyn Hill whose *Suffering in Security and Drowning in Comfort* exploited the sculptural and painterly potentialities of clay. A high point in this category was the stoneware and porcelain by Fiona Murphy. She understands the style to perfection. Her trans-*avant-garde* forms and decorations were visually hideous and psychologically evocative. The limpid passive shapes and ugly tones were infintely threatening — like those of leading European painters in this style.

Patsy Hely contributed a cheery painted teaset; Deborah Halpern's *Three Legged Pots*, while more personal and less fashion conscious, were also very successful. But to my surprise, Freya Povey's more explicit references to punk life-style were quite

This year we have witnessed the blossoming of the oriental vogue.

1. Brian Poynton. Library chair/steps. English elm.
2. Poynton. Chair opened.
3. Carolyn Hill. Suffering in Security and Drowning in Comfort. Stoneware, paint, lacquer.
4. Jeff Mincham. Raku urn.
5. Guiseppe Rjaneri. Still life with Fruit Bowl.
6. David Green. Life's Like That. Mixed Media.

uninteresting. Jenny Bannister's *Extinct* — a rather cynical work alluding to the ecological debate over animal-skins, yet bearing a high quality fashion label and an exorbitant price-tag — was an ugly ensemble made of stencilled kangaroo skin, quilted leather and animal bones. While it exuded a macabre, threatening punk presence I doubt that any punk could or would afford it at $1,400.00.

Kate Durham's *Lulu Nudie Lido Belle* a whole body adornment made of rubber, plastic, metal and diamentes had a much more realistic price $350.00 and a more genuine new-wave aura. Both works occasioned considerable comment. I overheard an academic say that he would lecture in the Bannister if his friend, a cleric, would serve mass in the Durham! (Which also makes a point about the varied audience the Meat Market is now attracting.)

The new-wave tendency was also very evident amongst the jewellery exhibits. I liked Michael Anderson's dangerous looking, but very elegant stainless steel, sterling silver and rubber necklace. It resurrected the old illusionist's trick of using daggers with rubber blades. Felicity Dalgleish's silver, bronze and yellow gold *Neckpieces*, whilst not too suitable for exhibition purposes could look stunning on the right wearer.

The Art/Craft Edge (Surviving)

The debate over just how far the crafts should go in the direction of the non-functional self expressive and conceptualising fine arts was expected to gather momentum after last year's travelling show *International Directions in Glass Art*. The evidence that this has happened is not decisive. Apart from a colossal and aggressive concrete, steel and plate glass sculpture by Richard Morell and an assemblage bridging the pseudo-mechanical and the ecological by Mike Wilson. *And the Bull-Ants were Buggars* (thus qualifying as *Australiana* as well), most of the items that fell into this category were much more subtle. Fran Clark's *Hushed Edge* and *Standing on the Edge* captured the spirit of the times with delicacy and artistry. Similarly Sue Lorraine's work, *The Julie Andrews Game* and *The Warrior* by Viliama Grakalic were highly acceptable both conceptually and sculpturally — though very unostentatious.

Nick Mount's *Ship in a Bottle* was a beautiful end product that justified his lengthy pre-occupation with the glass buoy and its enigmatic form. Bronwyn Hughes' small glass constructions *Sandy Point* and *Ghostly Remnant* evoked landscape reminiscences, that can be as delicately etched on the memory as they were traced in the layers of glass. Klaus Zimmer and Gisela Hunter continued to upset people with their highly personal, beautifully crafted paintings in glass while Ede Horton produced another cool abstraction. Very sophisticated, her *Still-Life* reminded me of the modernist painter, Adami. Frequently overlooked was Gerhard Emmerich's superb autonomous panel *A Saint in Decline*, a standard of glass painting rarely seen in Australia. John Greig has emerged as another very fine exponent of the *autonomous panel*. His superbly crafted works in high quality hand-blown French glass are inherently artistic.

On the other hand Thomas Henty and Alexander Syndikas who burst onto the glass scene in 1983 seem to have temporarily exhausted their invention.

The excellent exhibition of British fibre artists shown in Australia in 1983 seems to be echoed in exhibits by Barbara Bullard and John Corbett. Bullard's *Colour Moves*, made up of canvas, pigment and bamboo, achieved a vibrant abstract quality and rich surface texture. It was handled with what I call 'bravado of stitch'. Corbett's assemblage of bamboo, hand-made paper, fabric and thread was not quite as strong. Similarly Jan Ross Manly's autobiographic and nostalgic *Morse for Stitchers* and David Green's *Life's Like That* and *Golden Memories of You* continued to explore personal obsessions through mixed media assemblage and to push the fibre art component of the crafts movement closer to the expressive concerns of the individual artist. In fact, much of the current dynamism within the fibre arts — very evident in this year's show — should probably be attributed to the enthusiastic attitudes and leadership provided by David Green.

Consummate Craftsmanship (Surviving)

I would like to finish with some comments on the matters of excellence of skills and design. Whilst it is pleasing to note that acknowledged masters of the various crafts — for instance Ann Brownsworth in jewellery, David Wright in glass, the potters Greg Daly and Vic Greenaway and Bryan Poynton in wood — continue to pursue and develop their high standards, it is also gratifying to note the marked development on the part of others.

Amongst the large group who have done much to improve their craftsmanship and design one could single out Kurt Florimond in leaded-glass, Peter Crisp's slumped-glass and Mark Watson's furniture.

Unfortunately, however, there are those who appear to be marking time, or seem spent. This was particularly noticeable in the areas of jewellery, hot glass and certain dated and exhausted approaches to fibre. Similarly, there are some ceramicists who should consider withdrawing from such exhibitions until they manage to improve either their skills or artistry, or both in order to match the exciting new standards that are becoming more evident in the crafts movement. Such exhibitors do themselves and the movement, a disservice.

I have tried in this review to concentrate on the positive and instructive features of the annual Meat Market Craft Centre's *Australian Crafts* exhibition because I strongly believe that it affords us a valuable overview that not only identifies the new, but reveals the inept and atrophied. Such a forum is therefore vital for the health of the crafts and the profit and well-being of the craft community. It's an annual stocktaking of style.

> The show '. . . defines the subtle shifts of taste, the fickle nature of fashion and the delicate edge of acceptable craft . . .'

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

Galleries and Exhibitors is a new feature in *Craft Australia* that aims to provide exposure for work which is either on exhibition at the time of publication or has been exhibited during the quarter of the year preceding publication. It is open to craftspeople, galleries (national, regional and private), organisations and guilds that submit the following information: name of exhibitor (maker), title of work (if titled), media, technique, materials used, dimensions, year of execution. Name of gallery (or venue) where shown, opening and closing dates of the exhibition. Individual crafts people submitting photographs of work must include one of the following: exhibition announcement, press release, catalogue, or letter of verification from sponsor or gallery. Only good quality black and white prints of professional standard will be considered for publication and only when correspondingly labeled with maker's name, title, media, technique, dimensions and date of execution. Photographers will be credited when names are supplied. Photographs will be returned after three months if accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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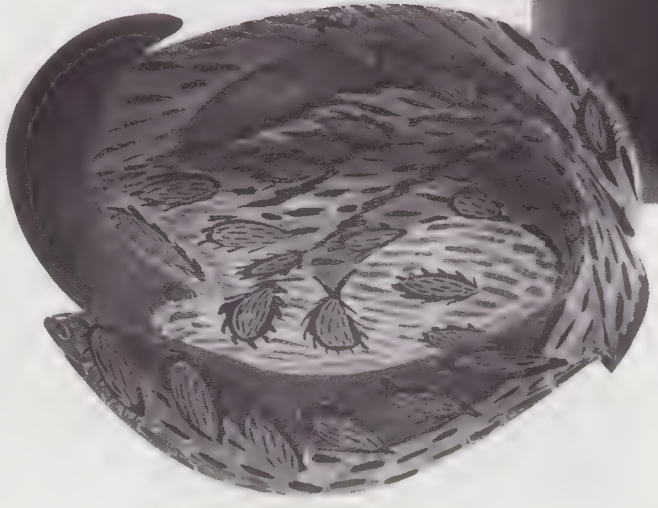

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1. **Stefan Bruggisser**, THE COUPLE, Beech, Height 38 cm (1982). Exhibited at Timbercutters Gallery, Mathoura, NSW (Photographer — James Ashburn)
2. **Stefan Bruggisser**, THE KISS, Pinus alpinus, height 41 cm (1982). Exhibited at Timbercutters Gallery, Mathoura, NSW (Photographer — James Ashburn)
3. **Fiona Murphy**, TIME IS COMING, porcelain clay, slab construction with coloured slips applied under a clear earthenware glaze, executed 1984. Dimensions 58 x 20 cm exhibited at the National Craft Acquisition Award Exhibition (25 July to 10 August 1984) organised by the Crafts Council of the Northern Territory.
4. **Fiona Murphy**, FORCE OF CIRCUMSTANCE, stoneware slab and coil construction with coloured slips painted under a clear glaze, executed 1984, 41 x 37 cm exhibited at the National Craft Acquisition Award Exhibition (25 July to 10 August 1984) organised by the Crafts Council of the Northern Territory.

1. **Laurens Tan**, LEGGED VESSEL, thrown porcelain with stains, height 224 mm. Exhibited at Macquarie Galleries, Sydney (February 1984) Narek/ Cuppacumbalong Galleries Canberra (March 1984) and Bonython Galleries, Adelaide (August 1984)

2. **Laurens Tan**, CUT AWAY BOWL, thrown porcelain with stains, diameter 265 mm exhibited at Macquarie Galleries, Sydney (February 1984) Narek/ Cuppacumbalong Galleries, Canberra (March 1984) and Bonython Galleries, Adelaide (August 1984)

3. **Gudrun Klix**, PATH EDGE/ MIND EDGE (detail of fig. opposite)

4. **Andy Watson**, NERIAGE BOTTLE, thrown from ball of prepared layers of white and coloured clays, carved, gold lustre, height 11 cm exhibited in 'Two Porcelain Views' at Cuppacumbalong Craft Centre, Naas Road, Tharwa ACT (15 April to 6 May 1984) (Photographer — David Reid)

5. **Jaishree Srinivasan**, "WINGS", bowl, inlaid pattern of coloured clay, wheel thrown, width 22 cm exhibited in 'Two Porcelain Views' at Cuppacumbalong Craft Centre, Naas Road, Tharwa ACT (15 April to 6 May 1984) (Photographer — David Reid)

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1. **Gudrun Klix**, PATH EDGE/ MIND EDGE, fine ceramic and mixed media reproduction of the Shoobridge Track on Mt. Wellington, complete with simulated rocks and branches, exhibited at Adelaide Festival Centre Gallery (12 May to 17 June 1984)

2. **Tanija and Graham Carr**, TATTOO BLUES, rawhide over timber, 1200 mm width and 900 mm height, from 'Skinscapes' exhibition at Quentin Gallery, Claremont, Perth, November 1983

1. **Chris Sanders** (potter) and **Murray Walker** (decorator), MASKED PEOPLE, Jug (1982) earthenware, incised and decorated with underglaze stains, exhibited at University Gallery, University of Melbourne (15 September-28 October 1983)

2. **Margot Manchester**, UNLIDDED LAYERED ROUGH, incised thrown stoneware jar, height 35 cm, width 22 cm exhibited at University of Tasmania, 10-16 December 1983 (Photographer — Peter Manchester)

3. **Hanni Stupp**, GOLDEN GUMNUTS, Knitwear exhibited at Hogarth Galleries, Sydney, 30 June to 18 July 1984

4. **George Ingham**, CABINET, in New Guinea Rosewood, Blackwood and Queensland Silky Oak, 2300 mm high and 520 mm square exhibited at Beaver Galleries, Canberra, 4-24 March 1984

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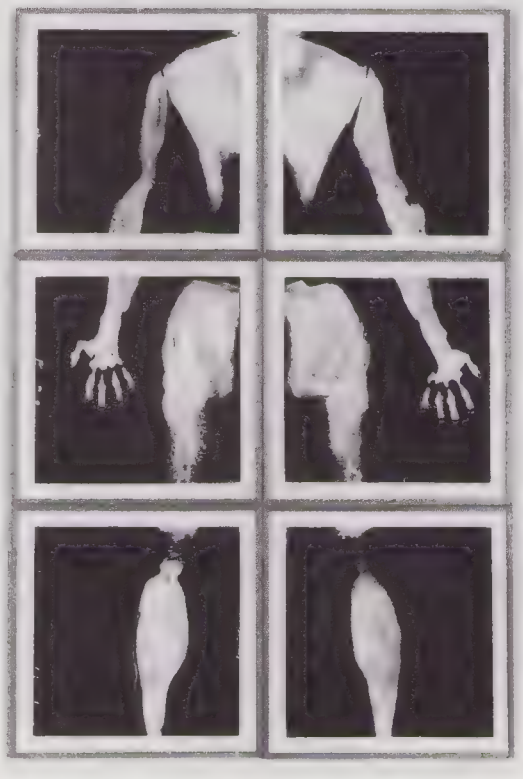

1. **Darani Lewers**, GROWTH, brooch, pewter, wire and seeds exhibited at Aladdin Gallery, Sydney, 2-30 June 1984 (Photographer — David Wardle)

2. **Sue Moore**, HANDBUILT FLOOR POT, with applied decoration, stoneware, Raku-fired, reduced, height 43 cm exhibited at Weswal Gallery, Tamworth (15 July to 12 August 1984) (Photographer — Bob Cooke)

3. **Darani Lewers**, IN THE BEGINNING, Pendant with rusted mild steel and sterling silver for "The Body as a Starting Point" exhibition at Gryphon Gallery, Melbourne (27 August to 14 September) (Photographer — Eardley Lancaster)

4. **Stephen Day**, STONEWARE CYLINDER, Hakemie decoration, iron brushwork, 24 x 13 cm exhibited at Market Row Gallery, Sydney (6 to 26 July 1984) (Photographer — Owen Studios, Toowoomba, Queensland)

5. **Mirabel Fitzgerald**, IMPRINT NEGATIVE, Etching/Aquatint for "The Body as a Starting Point" exhibition at Gryphon Gallery, Melbourne (27 August-14 September 1984 (Photographer — Robbie Perkins)

1. **Tim Moorehead**, SUNNY MORNING ON THE COAST, Ceramic Platter from South Coast Holiday series, 45 cm diameter exhibited at the Solander Gallery, Canberra (July 1984)

2. **Tim Moorehead**, SOUTH COAST AEROBICS, Ceramic Platter from South Coast Holiday series, 30 cm × 40 cm exhibited at the Solander Gallery, Canberra (July 1984)

3. **Dorothy Erickson**, "SEA CREATURE", hairpin in sterling silver, 18 ct. gold and dyed feathers, work exhibited at Australian Craftsworks, Sydney.

4. **Dorothy Erickson**, MULTIPURPOSE KIT, in 18 ct. gold, sterling silver and oxidised sterling silver, can be three bracelets and hairpin, or brooch and bracelets, scarf pin, hat pin. Work exhibited at Australian Craftsworks, Sydney.

5. **Peter Tully**, LARGE AND SMALL SKIN NECKLACES exhibited at Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney (June 1984)

6. **Peter Tully**, "BIG PUSSY BELT", leopard skin and leather fetish belt exhibited at Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Sydney (June 1984)

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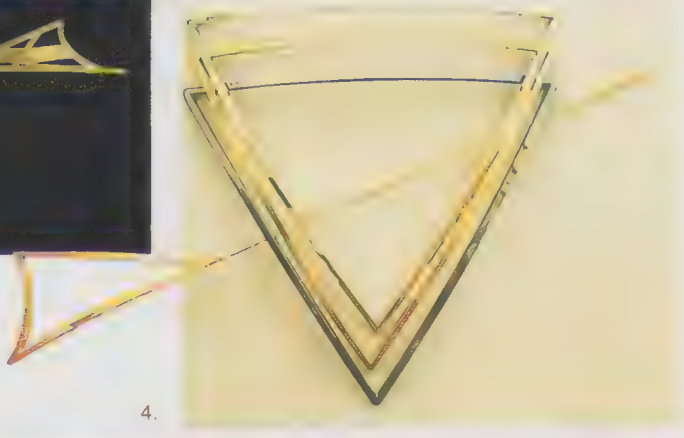

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Jenny Bannister, 'AURIGAS' and 'AURIGAS HAIR', black pigskin, metal studs. Stuart Devlin subsidiary Award, 1983

GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

1. **Tony Nankervis**, STORAGE JARS, exhibited in "Environmental Textures" at Lismore Regional Art Gallery (11-25 May 1984) (Photographer — Chris Meagher)

2. **Tony Nankervis**, STORAGE JAR, exhibited in "Environmental Textures" at Lismore Regional Art Gallery (11-25 May 1984) (Photographer — Chris Meagher)

3. **Ravi Kaur**, "THREE DANCERS IN THE SUN", Handwoven wall hanging, linen and wool, 96 × 165 cm exhibited at Squiggly Gum Gallery, Hawthorn, Victoria (4-14 March 1984) (Photographer — Barbara Macey)

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GALLERIES AND EXHIBITORS

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1. **Ann Taylor**, "ENVIRONMENTAL INSTALLATIONS", various found materials, exhibited in "Environmental Textures" at Lismore Regional Art Gallery (11-25 May 1984) (Photographer — Chris Meagher)

2. **Helen Adams**, exhibited in "Environmental Textures" at Lismore Regional Art Gallery (11-25 May 1984) (Photographer — Chris Meagher)

3. **Richard Clements**, 3 FOOTED GLASS BOTTLE, 14 cm high exhibited at Handmark Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania (15 April to 12 May 1984)

4. **Richard Clements**, GLASS BOTTLE, pale yellow glass with dark blue stopper, height 8 cm exhibited at Handmark Gallery, Hobart, Tasmania (15 April to 12 May 1984)

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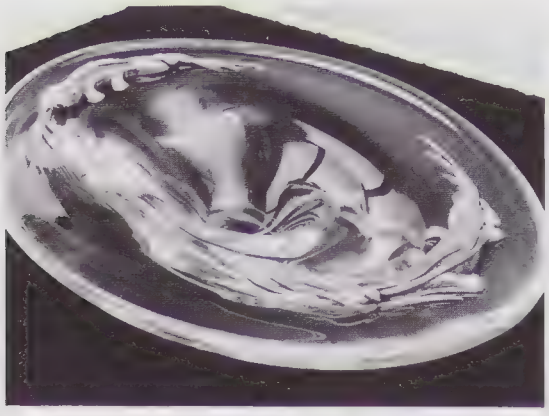
Commonwealth Give-away



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The Official Gifts Program

Fia Cumming

BOTH the policies and aesthetics of the Gifts Office in Canberra come under regular fire from piqued craftspeople and politicians. A small unit in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the office is responsible for choosing, buying and dispensing all official gifts given on behalf of Australia by Federal Ministers and the Governor-General to overseas guests and hosts. That makes it a highly visible and vulnerable target for criticism.

Because of the delicate nature of its business, the office operates under a rule of discreet secrecy. But **Craft Australia** was given a rare insight into its activities. Although the gifts officer for the past 12 years, Mr. Des Eddowes, retired on July 4 and the office will be restructured, much of its *modus operendi* will remain unchanged because of the bureaucratic framework that surrounds it.

Craftspeople have a double interest in what the office buys. It is an on-going large market for a range of craft works. The prestige of providing a gift to, say, President Reagan, is worth a considerable amount in itself. The most common complaint about the gifts chosen by the office is there are too many mass-produced items, too much of what might be called cultural junk and too little of the fine crafts that should be representing our country. Even the Minister for Sport, Recreation and Tourism, Mr. John Brown complained, in a recent report on an overseas trip, about the carved wood bowls and stuffed koalas he had to present.

Retiring gifts officer, Mr. Eddowes, had no background in the arts but will be replaced by someone with a fine arts degree. Nonetheless, Mr. Eddowes made no apologies for the standard or range of gifts that has passed through the office. **At any one time there may be up to 1000 items in the office's store** rangin gin value from $50 or less to several $1000s and the office aims to find quality even at the lower price range.

As Mr. Eddowes explained, a Minister going overseas has to take a large swag of gifts to give to people ranging from a ministerial counterpart to an escort or a driver. The stuffed koalas, leather wallets, keyrings, even the standard gold-coloured kangaroo stick-pins handed out by Qantas and other government enterprises, serve as inexpensive token gifts for dozens of people playing a minor role in making the tour successful. To give a handcrafted gift to these people would be excessive, unnecessary, and a waste of public money.

In fact money is, and must be, a crucial consideration for the gift-buyers. The total budget for gifts in 1983–4 was only $50,000. Mr. Eddowes said, 'There are plenty of sources of supply, but it's got to be good quality, at the right price'. If a craftsperson overcharges, the office will not try him a second time.

Leaving aside the mass-produced gifts, the office stocks a range of original craft works by Australians, including glass and silver by Flynns, of Kyneton, Victoria; enamel plates by Jenny Gore; silver and gold platters by Stuart Devlin; silver and crystal ornaments by Mike Hammond of Mt Eliza; leather and wood boxes by Neil Vertigan and Robin Hill; ceramics by Mark Heggie; silver and sandstone designs by Ann Eccles; woodwork by Ian Cameron, Garry Ellis and silver by Heinrik Forster.

Lower price crafts include cowhide and sheepskin rugs by J. Harris of Sydney; Aboriginal-design dress length

'There are plenty of sources of supply but it's got to be good quality, at the right price.'

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1. Flynn's of Kyneton. Glass and silver centrepiece.
2. Stuart Devlin, Silver and gold platter and goblets.
3. Mark Heggie. Ceramic container with silver animals.
4. Neil Vertogan, Robin Hill and others. Assorted wood work.

fabrics and tablecloths by Jumbana, of South Australia and gold, silver and copper-plated flowers by Flora Metallica of Western Australia.

The Gift Office policy is to keep an open mind about its craft suppliers. Mr. Eddowes claimed to know the work of almost every craftsperson in the country and keeps up with trends by reading **Craft Australia** and other magazines and visiting galleries and exhibitions, such as the Craft Expo. He also had a list of suppliers and regularly went back to those who supply what the office wants.

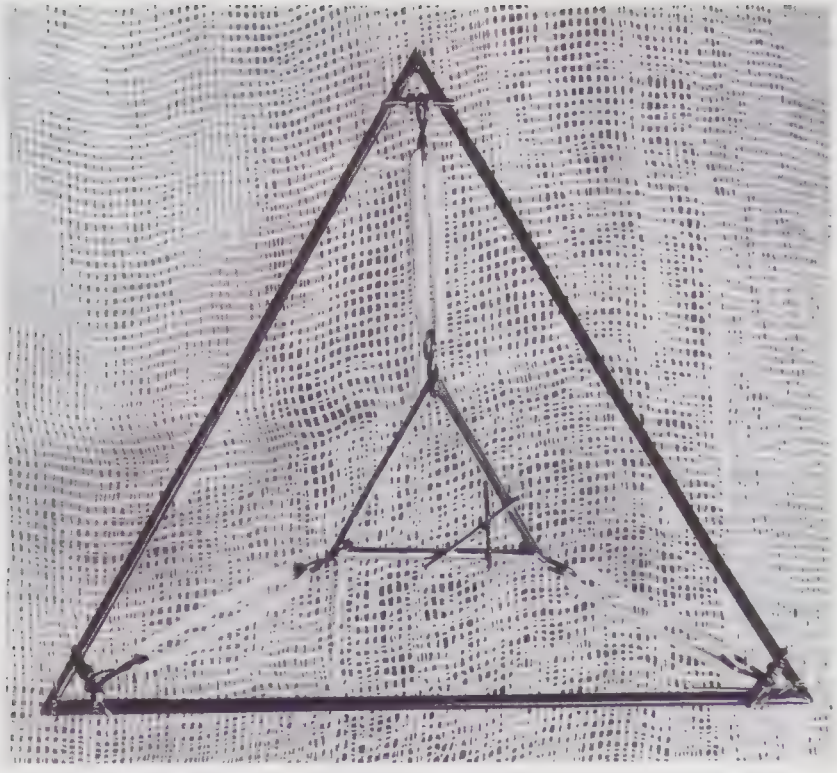
Craftspeople can send a sample of their work to the office, make telephone inquiries about the sort of objects the office wants, or come in person. The Flynn brothers, regular suppliers, make the trip to Canberra about twice a year to consult with the office. Occasionally, the office will approach an artist or craftsperson direct after seeing some of his/her work or at the request of a Minister who particularly likes that craft or wants to give crafts made by someone in his electorate.

Many of those who approach the office are disappointed. Mr. Eddowes said, 'You know the standard you ar looking for and you have to be cruel to be kind'. Often the office will suggest a new design or concept to the craftsperson, such as an echidna shape in place of a kangaroo, or a slight modification in size, shape or materials to make a range more suitable. Occasionally the rejection is for other reasons, such as a women who tried to sell another craftsperson's work as her own, or another who offered a piece with a 100 percent mark-up and was caught out.

One major requirement for a work to be considered as a gift is that it must be transportable. An exquisite work that arrives twisted or smashed in Moscow is clearly useless. The office advises many craftspeople to provide sturdy boxes for the works, and recommends the attractive but practical boxes by M.A. Shore of Rydalmere, Sydney. Portability is one factor that excludes most large works, especially paintings, although small landscapes have proved popular. Although the office boasts it has suppliers from every state, craftspeople from further reaches do have some cause to complain. When the gift store is depleted by a spate of overseas trips, the gifts officers naturally turn to local suppliers in the Canberra region. While some local galleries stock crafts from interstate, this does give local craftspeople a competitive edge, especially in the lower price ranges of leather and woodwork goods.

The gift office does not commission many items, although it does make suggestions to its regular suppliers. Mr. Eddowes said commissioning was just too expensive for the office budget except where the gift is intended for some special occasion such as the Royal Wedding. The NSW Premier, Mr. Neville Wran recently commissioned Anna Dybka crystal for an important trip to China; normally, this sort of work would not be considered suitable for the Federal gifts office because the lead crystal is imported, and of the cost. The office was, however, recently directed to investigate Dybka's work and will probably move more in this direction. But it will never have the loose pursestrings of the big companies such as BHP and CSR which can afford to have crafts made to order.

'It's a business proposition. It's the taxpayer's money we're spending,' said Mr. Eddowes. He might have added, you can't please all the people all the time.



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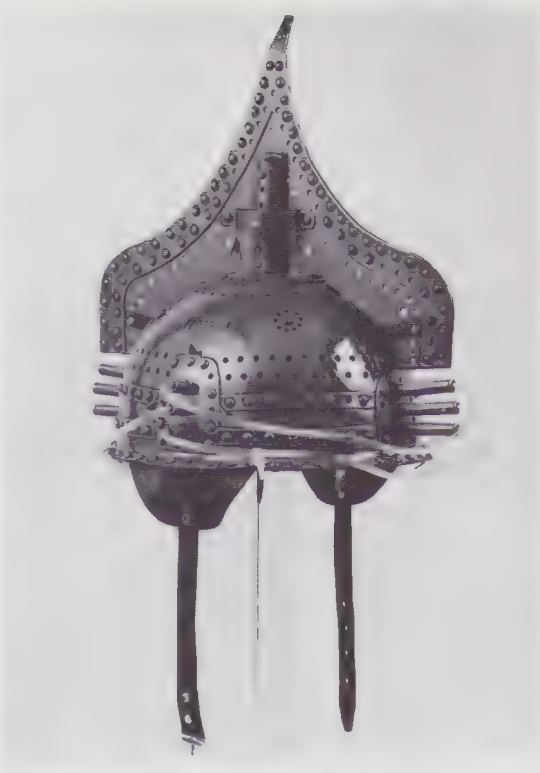

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Hedonist's Delight

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1. Anne Van Sebille. From *Thoughts into Flesh* 1984.

2. Ian Were. *Captain Blu; Proto 54* from Forces of Resilience, 1984. Photo, Michael Kluvaneh.

3. Anthony Steel addressed the hedonists.

1984 ADELAIDE ARTS FESTIVAL

Garry Benson

In 1984 the Adelaide Arts Festival reached world stature — in its programme of events, its reputation and its financing. The somewhat odious comparison for Adelaideans has been 'It's just like the Edinburgh Festival!,' but this year it literally outshone the Scottish version.

Aficionados of the Edinburgh Arts event have huddled, shivering, to watch the grandeur of the Tattoo, spotlit under the glowering bulk of Edinburgh Castle, then scurried like so many culture rats into the maze of streets for the theatrical and artistic titbits thrown to them by the 'official' and the Fringe Festival.

In comparison, the Adelaide Arts Festival is a hedonist's delight. No chill winds, cracking with snow — instead balmy, halcyon days of sunshine to enjoy in a city that qualifies for the same plaudits as Edinburgh. A city that you can escape from — into country, onto beaches, or into the hills — twenty minutes drive from the city centre.

Festival Craft '84 an exhibition coinciding with the gaiety, set the standard for the crafts input into the 1984 Adelaide Arts Festival. It conferred the imprimatur of A Display of Excellence, as the advertising suggested. The Crafts Council of South Australia asked craftspeople interested in the fair to submit slides and a dossier of their work to be judged by a panel of peers for the *Festival Craft '84* committee.

This resulted in a much higher standard of display of crafts than in previous years. The number of exhibitors was slashed from one hundred and forty to about seventy entrants which excluded a number of shoddy goods. The exhibitors included a number of South Australia's art and craft organisations, including The Jam Factory Workshops, the Designers Collective, SA Studio Potters, the Potters Guild, the SA Wood Group, the Leather Worker's Guild of SA, and the Stained Glass and Leadlight Group of South Australia.

The co-ordinator of *Festival Craft '84*, Geoffrey Humphries, said that the criteria for selection was not how well-known artists were, but was based on the quality of their work.

'Because all contributors' works have been judged by an unbiased panel on the degree of excellence and craftsmanship,' he said, 'young craftspeople were perhaps better represented than in the past, while many of the "old and bold" were pegged to the post.'

The smaller number of stalls made the site more accessible, and the inclusion of demonstrations, and educational information on most of the crafts displayed meant that the estimated daily crowd of over 80,000 people could look and buy. The hedonists made the most of the warm Sunday weather to laze and loll by the Torrens Lake, absorbing the sights and sounds of the Festival City. It was probably just as well, considering the shock that awaited visitors to the Jam Factory.

'Forces of Resilience' was a knee in the visual groin of Adelaide artlovers. In an exciting use of gallery space, artist-craftsmen Mark Thompson, Ian Were and Marcus Champ presented three installations based on the war theme of 'Victims and Survivors'. Marcus Champ made imaginative use of his tunnel space, crowded with a silver warhead and the rusty remnants of children's play. The screams and pitiful cries of children in a devastated landscape of kids' tricycles accompanied an electronic tickertape of Ronald Reagan's 'Star Wars' speech. Mark Thompson created a furore with his large tableau of the 'Seven Ages of Man' during the 1982 Adelaide Arts Festival. 'Victims and Survivors' reduced his scale, but not the visual potency of his work. His ceramic and wood maquettes for the grisly remnants of the post Nuclear Age were as shattering as the broken ceramic figures of babies, casually flung amidst the debris on the gallery floor. The final fantasy was embodied in Ian Were's remarkable collection of mixed media 'Helmets for World War IV'. He had skillfully moulded enamel, metal, decals and paper together to form an outrageous miscellany of millinery.

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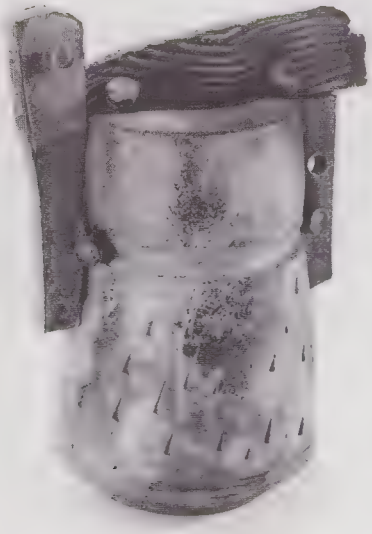

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Still at the Jam Factory, Catherine Truman and Anne Van Sebille presented a remarkable collection of jewellery that was mainly unwearable. 'Thoughts into Flesh', presented in the Bullring at the Jam Factory, was a challenging look at the question of what jewellery should be, and how it relates to not only women's bodies, but to women's issues. It was an exciting and thought-provoking display of work from two assured artists who were not afraid to put their jewellery where their politics are. Jewellery of a different kind, where a sense of introspection combined with masterly command of materials, was evident in Fourteen Sojourns, Annie Brownsworth's exhibition of new work at Greenhill Galleries.

Potters were represented in a number of exhibitions during the 1984 Festival. Studio 20 exhibited the Gold Medal Awards of the Potters' Guild of South Australia, and even further afield, Laurens Tan exhibited a stunning display of paintings and ceramics at the Limeburners Gallery in McLaren Vale. This exhibition added a further inducement to straying Festival visitors who escaped the charms of culture for the more sanguine charms of the wineries.

Milton Moon maintained his impeccable reputation with a fine range of new work at Bonython-Meadmore Gallery, and at Elmswood the work of Jeff Mincham was a stunning display of sculptural additions to wheel thrown forms, which had the heavy crustiness of its woodfire origins. Elmswood Fine Crafts also displayed new works from weaver Sue Rosenthal, who teased the viewer with space-invader images of vivid colour, woven into rugs. Other ceramic exhibitions included the work of Kathy Alty, Wayne Alty and Setsuko Ogishi at Penelope's in Harndorf; an extensive range of the work of Marianne Cole at L'Unique; and new works in Raku from Peter Harris which complimented the Primitive Plus exhibition at Harndorf's Fireworks Gallery.

Wood came into its own with the first exhibition of work by the South Australian Woodgroup at the Ebony Tool Co. This was a rather mixed show, which couldn't quite make up its mind whether the criteria for excellence was the sculptural work of Carrigy and company, or the more mundane and everyday wooden plates and bowls. The group looks as if it could have an interesting basis on which to explore its own sense of identity. Andrew Steiner had an exhibition of sculptured wooden forms in Huon pine at Bethany Art Gallery in the Barossa Valley.

In spite of this fine range of work above, the 1984 Adelaide Arts Festival wasn't outstanding in the area of the visual arts and crafts. The existence of Artist's Week was a great bonus for those who wanted to discuss and dissect their art, but the heartstoppers were very few and far between. In 1986, South Australia has its Sesquicentenary, and it's also a Festival year. I'm sure it's also the year in which the visual arts and crafts in South Australia will shine as brightly as the sun did for the 1984 hedonists' Festival of Arts.

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4. Mark Thompson. *Maquette for Tomb*, from Forces of Resilience, 1984. Photo, Michael Kluvaneh.

5. Jeff Mincham. Raku Pot. 1984.

6. Catherine Truman from *Thoughts into Flesh*. 1984.

7. Chris Jenson demonstrates.

The Art vs Craft Debate

Do you want an argument with a craftperson? Just ask if they're an artist. This art/craft debate has been raging for years — it rages still.

Last year, the Canberra School of Art invited nine arts personalities to address their well-known ArtForum program on this subject. The results were significant. Because of the success of the ArtForum program and the relevance of the topic to ***Craft Australia*** readers, we approached the school for permission to print these addresses. Udo Sellbach, the Director, graciously assented.

We are pleased to print as our first instalment, the address given by Robert Bell, Curator of Craft, Art Gallery of West Australia and the former president of the Crafts Council of Australia.

Crafts — The Decorative Arts?

A SERVANT OF RATIONAL DESIGN A VEHICLE FOR CREATIVE IMPULSE?

Robert Bell

YOU'VE had several months of the Art Craft debate and you may well have heard enough of it — so this discussion comes to you from the *Realm of Things* instead of the *Realm of Names*. I'm a visual person and I respond to wide range of stimulus, some of which is packed in the attractive wrapping of the art world.

So I'm going to show you pictures of a lot of objects today which in some way I feel say something about the creative impulse in our lives today.

If this room was a spaceship landing on a new planet and this talk an introduction to the culture of the inhabitants — think about what sort of people they would be.

If you're sitting up there wearing your artistic designer labels, proclaiming you as a Fine Artist or a Sculptor or a Craftsperson then your ability to respond to other people's ideas may already be impaired.

It's an affliction in this country and there are pockets of shocking snobbishness, discrimination and intolerance in the art world. Quite akin to racism and sexism.

The poor old art world got stuck with having to carry on a divine hierarchy of media relevant to another time, another place and mostly, another culture. The commercial support system for art has mostly been devised by the rich, who make up most of the rules. The value system which links art and money needs stability to survive and it is in the interests of people who handle art to prop-up the artificial status of some art forms / e.g. painting being 'nobler' than others / e.g. pottery.

For the art world to appear to have a semblance of coherence, the rules seem to have made it necessary for art forms considered lower on the scale to have to relate to the values of those higher on the scale; like supporting actors in a play.

It is my view that this system is nonsense and must be challenged. It has produced intolerance and defensiveness in all sorts of artists. How many sculptors do you know who would consider it the kiss of death to have their work considered in the context of the crafts — like a leper's touch, or gallery directors who won't consider the objects made by artists that don't conform to flat painted art in case the 'tone' of the place is corrupted by showing 'mere' craft.

In a country like Australia where all artists should nave equal opportunities, the 'caste' system which makes 'untouchables' out of artists who make objects is intolerable.

As in all revolutions, power comes from recognizing the strength within and it is from this point that the Crafts can begin to be understood in a new context unrelated to the 'caste system'.

The *Realm of Words* has only allocated a few terms for the Art World to use to describe its members — they are all unsatisfactory — artist, designer, craftsman (craftsman unfortunately also has to bear the extra burden of being considered a sexist term by half the population). There are grotesque combinations of these but these main categories have to position themselves in the two further unsatisfactory divisions of 'fine' art and 'the crafts' (or perhaps by implication, the lower, or baser or minor arts). I'm not happy about having these terms imposed on me so I think I will try to use the (out of date) term 'applied arts' to describe the work of artists who have chosen to make their art carry the extra load of being useful. Not necessarily functional or practical but at least where the narrative of creation has been made to refer to the narrative of function.

The implication of use, references to function, signs and symbols of use and function are elegant concerns for the artist and involves other people, providing a subtle but fundamental distinction for the user of the object, using another's poetry and freedom to promote dreams of potential use.

It's very easy for an artist to produce baffling work of small consequence and say: 'This work challenges your assumptions and if you don't like it, it's your fault'. A very neat cop-out. Applied art depends on

craftsmanship and a commitment to quality. It also gives vent to qualities of intricacy, beauty, workmanship, mystery, celebration of nature, affirmation of tradition and sensuality — (you don't hear much about these in art reviews).

An art object you *use* has a different power than a visual piece because it affects your attitude to other things you use, however, the unfunctional object also has a role to play in commenting on a craft and the impulses of making. Objects do have the ability to sustain a dense array of meanings and it is a role for the artist to exploit redundancy, metaphor and multiple references to increase the density of possible meanings. The artist can use his training of eye and mind, rational judgement and intuition, aggression and restraint to make objects that provide an orientation for seeing beyond and for animating space.

In an increasingly corporate world, the realm of private space is becoming very important — no matter how big or small that space, the rituals of everyday life are given intimacy and personal nuance by objects. This closeness to life as it is actually lived makes crafts and applied arts more easily changeable and reflective of daily life and less burdened with social comment. Objects do involve people in the sense of providing a direct link to the sense of need, whether real or imagined.

The groups of objects we own often become like household shrines; the 'good' china or linen packed away or displayed in china cabinets, the formal rooms rarely used, the souvenirs, the status symbols and so on. Practically, it could be done without but there seems to be a need for the symbolism of objects and, most probably, a continuing need for their manufacture.

One of art's major languages is the language of decoration and it has always found its richest expression within the applied arts. By ornamenting and decorating, people in every society have tried to transform the merely useful into the beautiful, giving meaning and importance to drab reality. The universal appeal of ornament is its uselessness in the functional sense. It is not bound by any practical constraint and is free — to move the eye, intrigue the mind, rest the soul — free to delight us.

Some thought it dangerous — **Not only is ornament produced by criminals but a crime is committed through the fact that ornament inflicts serious injury on people's health, on the national budget and hence on cultural evolution**. That's what Adolf Loos said in 'Ornament and Crime' in 1908.

Ornament makes things legible — it identifies things, letting us know how a thing is to be used — what to expect. The symbolic force of decoration gives some meaning beyond actual time and purpose — to make a statement of self-image, of desired social status, lifestyle or private fantasy.

Ornament, while something of a hydra, is rooted in pattern — pattern that provides a captivating reminder that repetition is implicit in our lives from the moment we start breathing. Patterns in nature suggest form and decoration in primitive art — stylised to bring some control over nature. Broken patterns now serve to challenge the regularity of the machine-produced, and the modernist fantasy of the 'seamless' world (laminate woodgrains and glass curtain walls by the kilometre, unbroken metres of 'Berber' carpet) — a reminder of human intervention and disruption of order.

The applied arts are serving this purpose with a visual language drawn from the world of capitalism, science and technology; and occasionally from other art.

There has been a dichotomy in the practice of crafts since their revival of the early 1960s, producing **organicists**, **historicists**, **folklorists** whose work stresses the individual hand of the artist, the use of natural materials and pre-industrial techniques. Others see a beautifully made wooden table as representing violence to a tree and nature and these modernists invent new forms, use industrial processes and materials, often in a parody of high-technology. Slick but subversive.

A lot of this new energy is crystallised in the work of Italian designers — there is in that country still an easy familiarity with materials, a feel for colour and a fondness for both the anatomical and psychological sides of ergonomics. What remains of the Renaissance in modern Italy encourages one's humanitarian responses.

Good design is not cool, tasteful and bourgeois but attempts to present technology as what it is: neutral, and therefore, potentially, a reassuring and comprehensible ally.

The feel for material and process is a central pivot in the practice of a craft, and I don't mean the stultifying 'truth to materials' approach where mere substances are presented as art, without any illusory or symbolic transformation, which finds affection for raw materials because of their place of origin.

Ornament reduced to sensual stimulation or corrupted to meaningless accretion adds little value to the experience of an object — decoration should allow the user or audience to understand and participate in the process of how an object came to be. It can unleash some of the power of humour and allow us the honest act of laughing at ourselves — it lets us be contradictory about what things **are** and what they **should be**.

This understanding of how objects came to be made can help us to see that crafts have their own direction, and a confidence that springs from the artists who make them having their **own** sources of reference. (As Barnett Newman said: 'Artists need aesthetics like birds need ornithology'.)

With these multiple references and reasons for making, it saddens me to see object-makers losing that confidence in the face of jealous and arrogant put-downs by other artists. **All** artists have the capability of creating magic through any form of expression — we should be using that magic on each other, supporting each other instead of creating divisions. The divisions we create now are going to be ours to live with (and you become what you hate).

So what of the future — where is the future for art given that children (your future clients and patrons) have a severely decreasing attention span — who will want a painting when any fantasy can be done in a 3 minute video clip?

Will craftsworkers become high class labourers in the service of the rich? There is already a healthy market for $1000 silk dresses in this country so the future for the luxury craft object looks promising. As I said earlier, the rich are used to making the rules so we may have to get used to biting the lip while using our craft skills to fulfil the fantasies or illusions of the rich. We may as well start thinking about the decorative possibilities of hand-made video disc cases or hand-coloured titanium ghetto-blaster grilles or decorated riot shields to protect the employed from the unemployed!

Making things for survival is a real scenario for a lot of people and the person with real skills will be ahead — even if it's only enough to give form and substance to expression.

In a regulated, conservative and conforming world, the ability to independently create is a rich possession and best not squandered on trying to make it fit into the narrow definitions of the 'Realm of Words'.

(Mr. Bell's address was illustrated with colour transparencies.)

'good design is not cool, tasteful and bourgeois

Crafts Council Calendar

Capital Territory

1 Aspinal St, Watson, 2602
Tel: 41 2373

Worn Issues, low cost jewellery related to environmental issues in Australia, 11-28 October

Patchwork Group Exhibition, 8-18 November
Wood Group of the ACT Annual Exhibition 21-30 November Trading Partners, craft items direct from refugee camps and co-operatives in the Third World

New South Wales

100 George St, Sydney, 2000
Tel: 241 1701

"New Horizons in Craft" Design and tradition, touring exhibition:
Bega RSL, 13-18 October
Cooma CWA Hall, 20-24 October
Albury Regional Art Gallery, 27 October-1 November
Deniliquin Town Hall, 3-8 November
Balranald Art & Crafts Centre, 10-15 November
Griffith Regional Gallery, 24-29 November
Portable Craft Series 2, resource kit/exhibition on basketry and leather:
Hastings Community Craft Centre, 24 September-8 October
Lake Russell Gallery, 15-29 October
Tamworth Community Art & Craft Group, 5-19 November
Brewarrina & District Arts Council, 26 November-10 December
Arts of the Indonesian Archipelago, Crafts Council Centre Gallery exhibition, 14 September to 28 October
Christmas Collections, Australia and International, Crafts Council Centre Gallery exhibition, 16 November-24 December

Northern Territory

Bullocky Point, Sannie Bay, 5790
Tel: 81 6615, 81 6616

Valerie Kirk, travelling tapestry weaving workshops. August-September
Judy Borrick, printed textiles, 3-21 October
Utopia Batiks, October-November
Deborah White, Ceramics graduate in residence, November
Crafts for Christmas, December.
Please call the gallery for more details.

Queensland

109 Edward St, Brisbane, 4000
Tel: 229 2661

Rosemary Fisher, organic basketry, 6-7 October
Joan Schulze, shadow quilting, 15-16 October
Joan Schulze, lecture on current work trends, 17 October
Joan Schulze, machine quilting wearables, 18/19 and 22 October
Joan Schulze, expanding design possibilities, 20-21 October
Mauri Maunsell and Deborah Carlisle, jewellery, 19 October-7 November
Bruce Anderson, ceramics and Rosemary Fisher, textiles, 9-28 November
Christmas Exhibition, mixed craft, 30 November-23 December

South Australia

169 Payneham Rd, St Peters, 5069
(PO Box 17) Tel: 42 4001

Foyer exhibitions:
City/country conference display, September.
Fibre Basketweavers Group, October.
'Intoklae' Potter Group, November.
Leatherworkers' Guild. December.

Tasmania

77 Salamanca Place, Hobart, 7000
Tel: 23 5622

Mitsuo Shoji, potter, date not set
Joan Schulze, fibre workshop. 8–9 October
Jan Ross-Manly, fibre. 20–30 October
Jan Ross-Manly and Jayne Thomas, fibre workshop. November
Jayne Thomas, fibre. 2–9 November
Christmas exhibition, Tasmanian craftspeople.

Victoria

7 Blackwood St, Nth Melbourne,
3051 Tel: 329 8856, 329 8719

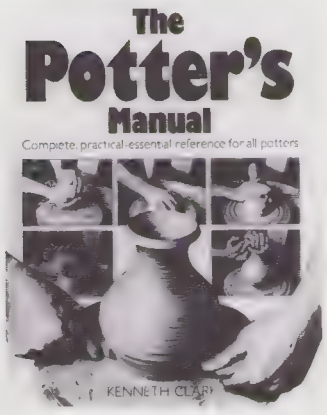
Textile exhibition, Meat Market Craft Centre, 10 October-4 November
Fiona Murphy, ceramics and Verena Warren, embroidery, Richard Clements, glass, Distelfink Gallery, 30 October-10 November
Tony Hanning, glass, Distelfink, 13-30 November
Focus 1984, exhibition of major works by Australian artists/crafts-people, Meat Market Craft Centre, 18 November-13 January 1985
Ceramics by Andrea Ebsworth and Robin Smith Clark, Blackwood Street Gallery, Meat Market Craft Centre, 31 October-21 November
Textiles by Mandy Boase and Kelly Lewis, Blackwood Street Gallery, Meat Market Craft Centre, 28 November to 18 December

West Australia

Perth Railway Station, Wellington St,
Perth, 6000 Tel: 325 2799

Joan Schulze, machine embroidery workshop. September 14–16
Joan Schulze, 'Print, Paint Rub' workshop. September 18–19
Marjorie Ridley, baskets. September 19–October 14
Donald Jackson, calligraphy workshop. October 9–13
Mixed Media Group Show, Mike Calder, Michael Tanner, Kate Weedon, 17 October–5 November
Ceramics Exhibition, 7–25 November
Christmas Show, Mixed Media. 28 November–24 December
Indian Ocean Arts Festival. 28 November–9 December

BOOKS



The Potter's Manual. Kenneth Clark, Macdonald, 1983. 208 pages of which 55 contain coloured photography, otherwise black and white photographs and line drawings.

Twenty years ago Kenneth Clark's first book 'Practical Pottery and Ceramics' filled a need by providing an excellent reference book for potters searching for directions beyond the Leach-Hamada tradition. Of his new book, **The Potter's Manual**, Clark writes of an '. . . attempt to fill some of the gaps left by my first book and to suggest ways in which potters can extend their techniques of production . . . and in doing this I have tried to keep a balance between the artist innovator and the production potter . . .'. The foreword refers to the change of attitude to ceramics in that '. . . the validity of an object is no longer seen to be dependent to such a degree upon the material used and the function of the article, but upon artistic and aesthetic qualities also . . .'.

Kenneth Clark has a workshop in Lewes, Sussex, and teaches part-time. He works mainly in earthenware and with his wife Anne has carried out many commissions from vessel production to architectural ceramics.

The Potter's Manual will be welcomed by those ceramicists interested in the move to the greater use of colour and experimental forms and the innovative use of industrial techniques. The author and his editors have been very successful in their choice of format for **The Potter's Manual**. The listing in the Table of Contents gives no hint of the generously illustrated pages and the wide variety of techniques they depict. Methods used by many well-known artists working in the field of ceramics are detailed, including a number from Australia and New Zealand, and the book is distinguished for the very full descriptions accompanying the illustrations. The text is interspersed with large and small photographs and some line drawings. Examples of works clearly and concisely state size, artist's name and technique of making.

Basic throwing, coiling and slab production can be found in the section entitled Techniques of Making, as well as the making and use of press and slip-cast moulds, how to use a jolley, tile-making, and the making of laminated and agate ware. The preparation of pigments and stains, the use of underglaze pencils and crayons, enamels and silk-screen colours are documented in the section entitled Raw Materials.

The major section of the book deals with Techniques of Decoration. Sources of inspiration accompany details of the work of ceramicists such as Eileen Nisbett whose fine porcelain constructions are frequently inspired by machines; Dorothy Feibleman who intrigues with fine laminated wares; Siddig El-Nigoami whose burnished and incised slipwares give a contemporary look to an old folk technique; and James Tower, painter turned potter, who with a simple sgrafitto through glaze on glaze produces works of great strength. Among other techniques detailed are *terra silligata* as used by Fiona Salazar, mocha ware by Robin Hopper and inlay by Indonia Van der Bilj.

There is information on printing techniques for the reader who may wish to investigate this field. A section on silk-screening includes the making of screens, the production and application of indirect and direct photo stencils and how to print directly onto flat ware, as well as brief notes on indirect printing, a method mainly used for placing images on cylindrical surfaces. The printing and fixing of transfers is described, as is a method for stencil printing with glaze.

This isn't a comprehensive handbook. It contains no section on glaze formulation or kiln building for instance, although it does show how to test and prepare clay bodies. The recipe collector may be disappointed. However among the few recipes given can be found the ingredients for David Leach's porcelain body; an Egyptian paste body which Dick Studley throws; Mocha tea, *terra silligata* and a tube-lining mixture for isolating glazes.

Kenneth Clark refers to the diminishing use of articles made by hand for everyday use, the ceramic medium being increasingly used by the makers of art objects. He warns that '. . . there may come a time when technology can no longer be sustained at the present level and man is once more forced to use his personal skills and resources for survival . . .'.

Meanwhile if the reader has a bent for the experimental there are skills and ideas to be tried and **The Potter's Manual** can help show the way.

Margot Staples
Margot is the previous editor of 'Pottery in Australia' and past president of the Potters' Society of Australia.

Bee Quilting

Marjorie L. Share and Deborah Lerme Goodman, 1983.
The Smithsonian Institution Travelling Exhibition Service (SITES), Washington, D.C.
64 Pages, Bibliography.
$US7.50.

SITES Education Department Head Marjorie Share provided the concept and research for the Bee Quilting kit and resource booklet that accompanied the Smithsonian's 1978 travelling exhibition 'Quintessential Quilts'. The kit was written for children and included quiltmaking history, quilt-lore and guidelines for parents and teachers. The kit was later revised to accompany two new SITES exhibitions, 'Kentucky Quilts' and 'Irish Patchwork'.

Deborah Lerme Goodman, Education Co-ordinator, then worked with Marjorie Share and expanded the kit into this present work-book format. It is presented on good quality paper, art work is of a high quality and binding is the metal ring type.

The first half of the book presents chapters on history,

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construction techniques, the quilting bee, naming quilt patterns and the contemporary trend to quilts as wallhangings.

Following the text in each chapter, there is comprehension-style 'Questions for Kids' followed by 'Activities for Kids' and a section 'For Parents and Teachers'.

The second half of the book is headed 'Making Your Quilt', with glossary of terms, clear diagrams (wrongly labelled on p. 37), yardage chart, and instructions for making ten simple 4-patch or 9-patch quilts. These designs are simple variations of squares and half-square triangles. Patterns are not given their traditional names (which would have added 'romance') but that pares down the drafting system to essentials.

Measurements are in inches; patterns in 4 inch modules; fabric is estimated in yards. Fabric calculations seem accurate and instructions clear. Seam alowances are very big which will create bulk and be in the way when quilting (as they suggest) ¼ inch from the seam line. The quilting technique described is stab-stitch . . . perhaps children would find it easier than running stitch.

Despite the authentic and plentiful hotch-potch of illustrations, the book doesn't quite fire visually. Despite the concept for the book, perhaps my expectations were for a more commercial rather than a school project kind of layout.

The text is thorough and logical but the questions have the ring of all school excursion questions — a death knell for childish enthusiasm over a welcome break from the classroom!

There is a frustrating mix of 'simple' writing and tasksetting on the one hand the abstract intellectual on the other. For example, 'List as many items as you can that are quilted. Challenge your friends to list more', (p. 11), compared with, 'How would today's politics or popular culture be reflected in quilt design?' (p. 18).

I agree that questions and text about an exhibition help us all to focus and understand, as well as gain insight into historical events. However I think there is a risk in becoming too scholarly here.

An example is in the 'What's in a Name' chapter where the 'Activities for Kids' task is: 'Choose a pattern name. Write a brief description of the person, object or events related to that name'. Wouldn't it be better to draw and talk about an imagined block? Quiltmaking, after all, is visual and practical.

The questions would nevertheless be a good basis for discussion while actively cutting and piecing.

The most captivating quiltingmaking books are those that combine romance and humour and good old-fashioned story-telling techniques or those books that have dazzling colour pltes. (The impressively detailed definitive works form another category.)

This book has an extensive bibliography of such current patchwork bibles. *Bee Quilting* is basically a teaching aid and at $7.50 U.S. it is good value. It would best suit teachers working with 5th, 6th and 7th grades in our system or adults teaching themselves.

Robyn Cooper
(Robyn Cooper is a quiltmaker and teacher from Sydney)

'Glass Fusing. Book One'
Boyce Lundstrom and Daniel Schwoerer.
Vitreous Publications. Inc. 1983.

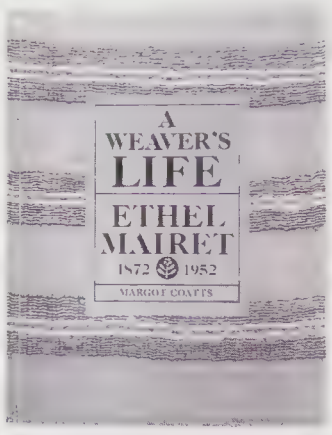
Boyce Lundstrom and Daniel Schwoerer are the founders of the Bullseye Glass Company in Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. Their impact and success in the manufacture of coloured glass has been tremendous, their enthusiasm is infectious and their vision regarding the promotion of glass fusing, through the compatible range of glass that they produce, is proving to be a very real marketing success.

Boyce was here in Sydney during May, to hold a workshop on fusing techniques that was extremely informative.

The book, 'Glass Fusing. Book One', is a very good handbook. It serves as an introduction to those unfamiliar to glass, as well as being equally acceptable to experienced glass artists as an extension of ideas to their own fields. It is very well set out, and includes chapters on compatibility and testing, annealing, kilns, sagging, slumping and moulds, sawcutting, grinding and polishing, with a most relevant section on the important aspect of presentation and display.

As Boyce and Daniel point out, the technique of fusing glass has existed for almost 4,000 years. They are responding to a need by initiating a resurgence of a little known process of great beauty and possibilities, by producing a wide range of compatability tested glasses, thus eliminating one of the main hinderances in exploring fusing, and thus allowing a flow, even a flood of creative activity.

Cherry Phillips. N.D.D., A.T.C. (Manc. Uni.)



A Weaver's Life: Ethel Mairet 1872–1952, Margot Coatts. Bath, U.K. Crafts Study Centre, 1983.

Until recently the contemporary crafts community has tended to ignore its immediate origins, although there is strong interest in the craftwork of ancient cultures, and in the folk crafts of many third world countries. The British Crafts Study Centre, established to promote the study of 20th century British crafts practitioners is working toward remedying this situation and plans to publish a series of books on the Pioneers of Modern Craft. This very readable account of the life and work of Ethel Mairet is the first to appear.

It would be instructive to do a comparable series on Australian crafts practitioners, examining the work of early members of the Arts and Crafts Societies for example.

Once called the mother of English hand-weaving by no less a figure than famous Japanese potter Shoji Hamada, Ethel Mairet had a very productive career, active in spinning, weaving and dyeing for 30 years. She also wrote books on weaving and dyeing and made an important contribution to textile education in Britain.

Ethel Mairet was almost completely self-taught apart from a few introductory classes in Ceylon and Britain. However she gained immensely from informal contacts in these countries. She spent three

A Macdonald publication

The Potter's Manual

KENNETH CLARK

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years in Ceylon (1903–1906) with her first husband who was undertaking a geological survey there. As they travelled around the country they recorded the arts and crafts of the villages as well as collecting artefacts and their research was published in the book *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*. The beauty of the textiles of the area, particularly the embroidery and weaving, was closely observed by Ethel Mairet.

When Ethel and her husband returned to England they moved to the Norman Chapel which they had been renovating at Campden in the Cotswolds where C.R. Ashbee, leader of the Guild of Handicraft had his workshop. It was at Campden that Ethel first began weaving and it is certain that her contact with the Guild influenced her attitude toward her work. When her first marriage ended in divorce she eventually married one of the Guild employees, Philip Mairet, a union that lasted 17 years.

It is necessary to place Ethel Mairet's weaving in context. In the 19th century the tradition of hand weaving had almost completely disappeared in Britain. William Morris started to produce wollen furnishings, carpets and tapestries from the 1870s. Others began to revive pattern weaving and tapestry by 1900.

Ethel Mairet returned to the production of simple cloth. Moving away from pictorial weaving she explored the surface qualities inherent in the character of yarn used. She worked with silks, slub cottons, rayons, chenilles, sisal, bast fibres and even cellophane strips.

Generally she worked in plain weave, occasionally with crammed weft to produce solid lines of colour across the fabric. At times she used spaced reedings or distorted weft to create delicate textural effects.

Her feeling for colour was one of the greatest strengths of her work. As C.R. Ashbee wrote, 'She has the soul of oriental colour in her'. From the 1920s her workshop concentrated on dyeing the yarns used, mainly with indigo, madder, cochineal and the British plants weld, bracken and crotal. In most of Ethel Mairet's fabrics the primary hues blaze richly on backgrounds of mellow earthy shades, many of them reminiscent of the Ceylonese and European fabrics she had collected on her travels. The weavings were used as scarves, shawls, cushions, knee rugs, floor rugs as well as made up into simple clothing. There are some lovely colour illustrations of her fabrics in the book, I only wish there could have been more.

Ethel was also an inspiring teacher, a catalyst during an important period in the development of British crafts. As she wrote, 'We need . . . living, oral and practical continuity of education. Our workshops must become schools of workmanship, producing good workers as well as good work . . . We must not merely praise the old training by apprenticeship, but take and teach apprentices'. During the 30 years she ran her workshops she put her words into practice, employing many apprentices, including such well known contemporary weavers as Peter Collingwood and Marianne Straub.

Despite tragic private circumstances and constant financial problems (she was always in debt) it was a full and productive life. She died in 1952 having woven about a yard of thick and thin wool mixture on the same day. As her friend Mary Barker commented, 'It's not bad to have done something creative on your last day of life'.

Beth Hatton
Beth is the former Editor of Handweaver and Spinner.

How to Sew Leather, Suede, Fur
Phyllis Schwebke and Margaret Kiohn, Collier Macmillan (New York) Price $10.95.

For those contemplating making leather garments for this winter's fashions, this book will be invaluable advice on construction techniques.

The book covers the sewing of leather, suede and fur. It gives a brief overview of the historical usage and the material, its tannage and maintenance. Commercial pattern selection and required equipment is examined with a glossary of leather and fur terms and a list of suppliers provided. The index is comprehensive, allowing quick selection of specific subjects.

As the book was written in America, there are some problems with terminology not applicable in Australia. For people unfamiliar with purchasing leather etc., this may be confusing. For example,

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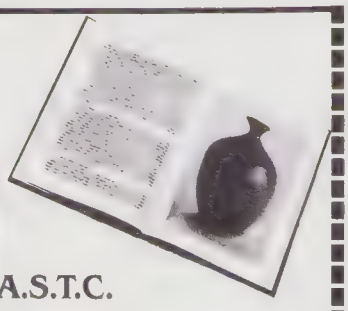

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the measurement for the thickness of leather is expressed in 'ounces'. In Australia, leather and suede is sold by millimetre thickness. Another area of confusion is the size of skins and sides. The book deals exclusively with square feet, while in Australia much of the leather and suede is sold in square metres. (For information, the conversion is 1 sq. metre equals 10.75 square feet.) However, many of the smaller skins (calf, sheep and pig) suitable for garment construction are sold in square feet.

The formula for converting fabric yardage to leather footage is useful as a rough estimate of the required amount of leather. But, the most efficient method is to take the pattern pieces to the supplier. Unfortunately, the list of suppliers is of no use to Australian readers.

The value of the book lies with its construction techniques. Although it bases its instruction on late sixties patterns, the techniques for construction are timeless. So don't be put off by the dated photographs!

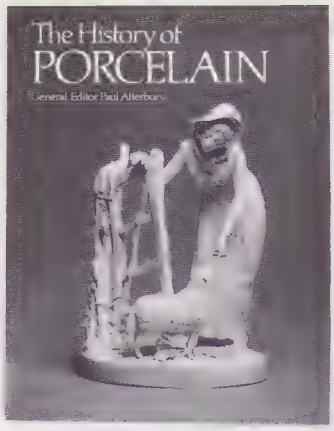
The book provides detailed information on layout, 'pinning down' the pattern and subsequent construction. Various seams, buttonholes and other closures are explained in detail; and a variety of construction tips are suggested for projects.

The section on fur provides one of the few comprehensive descriptions of fur garment construction. Again, the criticism of suppliers and terminology apply, but the construction section is very good. There is an interesting section on re-styling jackets, coats and stoles.

For those wanting to know how to shape mink ears, there is a somewhat unconventional chapter on this in making a fur boa. There is a follow-up chapter dealing exclusively with mink, probably of little interest to the general reader.

In summary, a relatively inexpensive book with a good coverage of technical considerations in making leather, suede, and fur garments.

Penny Amberg.
Penny is a leather artist and teacher at the Canberra School of Art. This review is reprinted from CRAFT A.C.T., the newsletter of the Crafts Council of the A.C.T.



The History of Porcelain, edited by Paul Atterbury, 1982, Orbis Publishing, London. 256 pages, about 300 colour and monochrome illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. $29.95.

Porcelain originated in China during the *Tang* dynasty, about the eighth century. It is extraordinary then, that this book claims — doubtfully — to be 'the first to tell fully the story of porcelain from its roots in the prehistory of the Far East to its present position as a major industrial product'.

Paul Atterbury, the editor, is known for his research for Royal Doulton, the 1978 Minton exhibition at the V&A, and his editorship of **Connoisseur** before it went downmarket. He has gathered together a dozen experts working in Britain into a book which hangs together well. The chapters they contribute deal with Eastern and Western porcelain, though from an understandably European viewpoint and with an emphasis on the last 250 years. Significantly the book manages to bridge the artificial gaps between what are often separated into 'antiques', 'old wares' and 'crafts' by maintaining a continuous narrative right up to the 1980s.

By its coverage and by its treatment of the evolution of style against its historical and social background, the book aims at three segments of the market — the porcelain collector, the student of design, and the practising potter.

The comtemporary relevance of porcelain as a material is not just to the industrialised factories of Doulton and Wedgwood. Though Australian studio potters have been steeped in the stoneware and earthenware tradition, some have worked with the higher fired, translucent and resonant porcelain or bone china bodies. Lucie Rie, David Leach and Geoffrey Swindell are notable British studio potters whose porcelain is illustrated in the book. Glenys Barton, who cooperated with Wedgwood in producing slip-cast bone china, also features. Some of these artists are familiar to Australians from the 'Image and Idea' exhbition put together by John Houston and which toured Australian museums in 1980.

Modern industrial porcelain is briefly examined by Julia Welbourne of the Middlesex Polytechnic. Practical considerations such as 'dishwashability' and improved thermal shock resistance, and marketing gimmicks such as commemorative plates, figure more prominently than design innovations. This is what the public wants; yet it comes as a shock to learn that the 'Old Country Roses' pattern by Royal Albert, an insipid sentimental chromolithograph design at least forty years old, is the best-selling pattern in Britain (p. 226). Traditional china services probably equate with the elegant atmosphere that many people try to achieve at dinner parties, complemented by candlelight and Vivaldi.

Other specialised works on aspects of porcelain exist, but no other book draws it all together so well. It will become a very useful reference work.

John Wade. John is Senior Curator at the Power House Museum, Sydney.

Porcelain, Traditions and New Visions
by Jan Axel and Karen McCready. Watson-Guptill Publications, 1981 200 pp.

This book joins a number of works focusing on porcelain. It is ambitious and enjoyable providing an abundance of material and raising important issues regarding the nature and use of the material. Yet perhaps it suffers somewhat from a problem of timing, for it is impossible not to compare it with other books, in particular Peter Lane's **Studio Porcelain**, with which it shares a similar format and structure.

In both cases the authors have set themselves an awesome task, choosing to add historical background data and consideration of the industry, of collectors, galleries and museums to the main core of material examining contemporary porcelain artists and their work.

Lane, concerned to present technical information and to record the personal attitudes of porcelain clayworkers, appears to have consciously written for practising potters or non-participants with at least some knowledge of his subject. One cannot but wonder whether Axel and McCready, on the other hand, in their obvious enthusiasm for the topic, have failed to identify and cater to a particular audience. They have chosen to interpret for us the ideas and intent of the work they present, generally omitting technical considerations of a 'how to' nature. As such, they appear to have chosen a more distinctly descriptive course. Chapters are organised around issues seen as particular to porcelain (whiteness, translucency, et cetera) and it is through consideration of these issues that any technical information is offered.

The text is, at times, absorbing and thought provoking, yet these excellent passages often lapse, and it is then that we puzzle over whom, in fact, the authors sought to address. An extremely fundamental section on the effects of kiln atmosphere, for example, seems unlikely to inform either potters or committed enthusiasts. But the same chapter references somewhat obscure glaze types without explanation or elaboration.

Further, one may puzzle over the balance between text and illustration. The reader is often tantalised by the possibilities of issues raised, then disappointed to find the promise of greater analysis cut short after only the most superficial discussion, the text supplemented instead by illustrations. If there were a deliberate decision to lean towards a picture book, and if photographs are to carry a loading of the message, we might reasonably expect great attention to the choice, quality and presentation of reproductions. Yet most photographs are black-and-white, not a problem in itself, but very often they are particularly cited in describing clay or glaze colour . . . Similarly, regular subscribers to the American **Ceramic Monthly** magazine will recognise many of the photographs and will notice loss of clarity this time around.

More serious, perhaps, are a number of inaccuracies. Swindell's distinctive broken lustre technique, for example, is mistakenly dismissed as 'mottled glaze'. Irritating, too,

are the lengthy redundancies in historical material of chapters one and two. The style of each chapter suggests separate authorship, yet both are included, seemingly without editing to remove overlapping material.

Despite these deficiencies and problems, Axel and McCready's book does provide further dimension to the growing fund of material directed at porcelain enthusiasts. It should interest those involved in this increasingly popular area, without, I suspect, assuming the central position in any devotee's library.

Jacqueline Clayton
Lecturer, Ceramics, Art Department of Nepean College of Advanced Education.

The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping

A Practical Guide to the Conservation of Old Houses and their Contents. Hermione Sandwith and Sheila Stainton. Allen Lane, in association with the National Trust, 1984, London. (Publication by Penguin Australia 1984, A$35). 271 pp., several plates and figures, 5 appendices, covering methods of light protection and equipment needed.

This book deals with housekeeping on a fairly high level, where the contents of stately homes, indeed, national treasures, need to be looked after to ensure their survival for as long as possible — survival, that is, in the face of the crowds of people who visit the National Trust Houses in England, Wales and Ireland when they are open to the public in the summer months.

Sheila Stainton, one of the authors, has the title of 'Housekeeper' for the National Trust. The title is misleading. She is far from being a superior Mrs. Mop, but is an acknowledged conservation expert — textiles are her speciality. Her role is to advise custodians at the houses on the proper care of the contents on a regular basis.

She is helped in her task with advice from conservation experts in a variety of fields. One is Hermione Sandwith, co-author of the book. She is an expert on paintings, has a degree in the history of art from London University, and had two years' valuable experience in practical conservation on works of art in Florence after the devastating floods of 1966. She is now Deputy to the Surveyor of Conservation to the National Trust.

Though the book is specifically written for those who are looking after the contents of historic houses, it has useful advice for everyone who has something worth keeping. I turned straight away to the chapter on caring for antique furniture because there is always so much controversy on whether or not to polish, and, if so, how often, and what to use. The book says:
'The surface finish given to a piece of furniture when it was made was intended to be permanent; in normal circumstances it only needs a light dusting with a clean dry duster to keep it clean and free of dust. Occasionally buff up the polished surface with a duster or chamois leather, which should be soft, clean and dry. Wax polish should only be used once or at most twice a year'.
Then it adds (in capitals) USE ONLY THE RECOMMENDED WAX POLISH. (Note: The National Trust shops in Australia sell a 'recommended' wax.)

The golden rules for basic conservation of most things, it seems, are daily dusting, handling as little as possible, and keeping light to a minimum. to reduce light, advice is given on placing of items, use of blinds, and so on. The book emphasises that **any** light — it does not have to be sunlight — will cause deterioration over a period of time not only to textiles but also to paintings and drawings, wallpaper, books, carpets and wood. Light causes dark wood to go light, light wood to go dark and inlaid wood to buckle. Often the damage is irrevocable, that is extra disastrous if the furniture happens to be Sheraton or Chippendale. Atmospheric conditions are also extremely important for conservation and some very well-informed and scientifically-based advice is given. Advice is also given on safe handling of ceramics and glass and on moving furniture, that is, the correct way for lifting a chair.

There is advice for caring for all manner of items, including butterfly collections (protect with glass), billiard tables (regular brushing and ironing), model ships (handle as little as possible), musical instruments (a full chapter on these), ephemera (postcards, theatre programmes, *et cetera*), birds' eggs (dust only with a soft cloth or a ponyhair fitch brush) and stuffed animals. Particularly engaging is the advice for cleaning a stuffed rhinoceros 'Brush with a 5 cm. wide paint-brush, while at the same time using a Hoover Portapower set at low speed, fitted with the crevice tool in order to collect the dust'.

Joyce Burnard
Joyce is a free-lance journalist and the Editor of 'Context', Newsletter of the Australian Costume and Textile Society.

Contemporary Textile Art: Scandinavia

Charles S. Talley, Carmina International: Stockholm and New York. 200 pages, illustrated in full colour. $35.00. Mail Order only from Carmina International, 700 Queen Anne Road, Teaneck, New Jersey, 07666, USA.

In the past fifteen years the publications on textiles have created a new phenomenon. Never has so much been in print on this subject. The

BOOKS RECEIVED

Title	Author	Publisher	Price
The Essentials of Yarn Design for Handspinners	**Mabel Ross**	Mabel Ross Crook of Devon	£5.95
Arts of the Indian Americas	**Jamake Highwater**	Harper & Row	$52.50
Images in Clay Sculptures	**Charlotte F Speight**	Harper & Row	$45.00
History of Jewels	**J Anderson Black**	Orbis London/ Child & Henry	$29.95
History of Furniture		Orbis London/ Child & Henry	$29.95
Porcelain Dollmaking in Australia and New Zealand	**Helen Trihey**	Heinemann Australia	$19.95
Archiving (pamphlet)	**Janet de Boer**	Crafts Council of Queensland	
Smocking	**Audrey Vincentre Dean**	Hutchinson Group (Australia)	$13.95
Macramé Australian Animals and Flowers	**Nan Bosler**	Kangaroo Press	$4.95
Earning a Living in the Visual Arts and Crafts in Australia	**James F Stokes**	Hale & Iremonger	$14.95

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happiest result of so much quantity is that it increases the odds of quality. The publishing of 'Contemporary Textile Art: Scandinavia' by Charles Talley puts another book on the quality list. It also sets an important precedent. What Mr. Talley did could be done by other dedicated researchers for other parts of the world. Indeed, Australia needs this sort of book done on our contemporary textile people here. And so does New Zealand.

Talley was able to get financial backing from the Swedish Institute, Oberlin College, and the Swedish Cultural Society of Northern California. He has justified their support that was essential for him to have the chance to thoroughly study the textile work being done in Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland.

Virtually all the pieces are shown in colour and there are a large number of visuals, as there should be. Most of the pictures are quite good quality and they have the advantage of being placed near the text describing them. The book was printed in Sweden and has Scandinavian distribution as well, though it was written in English. Talley's writing style is admirable and one sees why he went on to edit 'Craft International', which recently produced a special issue on Scandinavia.

There are few startlingly new ideas arising out of the works shown but there is a consistent strength of content due partly to the selector's choices. He states that, 'There is, then, the danger of one's hiding within the safety of acceptable expression instead of assuming the risks of innovation. This is in part a result of the educational system in Scandinavia, which for the most part stresses technical training over the development of design.' Talley adds another interesting comment in his introduction, 'There is no 'star system' in Scandinavia, and far less of a hierarchical delineation of 'art' from 'craft' than exists elsewhere in the world.'

But even if you won't be rocked by new ideas there are plenty of good ones and the book adds greatly to our appreciation of Scandinavia while enhancing a worldwide perspective on contemporary textiles.

Janet De Boer

BUILDING A HOUSEFUL OF FURNITURE

Simon Watts, The Taunton Press, Inc., 1983

The book's title is self-explanatory and heralds the latest addition to a category that has long been standard fare. Many books have been strongly biased towards historic styles while others, like many of the pieces for you to build shown in woodworking magazines, possess no style at all.

The large size (305mm wide x 253mm high) of the 211 pages allows scope for clear illustrations. However the fat type faces and use of several draftsmen detracts from the generally clear diagrams. The photographer has wisely not permitted his name to be mentioned. In some photographs the backgrounds are masked, in others not — how many different floor coverings can you spot?

The ten categories of furniture each occupy a separate section. For some reason known only to Mr. Watts the introductory notes to each section concentrate on European furniture prior to 1600, whereas none of the furniture which we are invited to build is stylistically earlier than 1800 and most is definitely post 1900.

In the text Mr. Watts sensibly assumes a reasonable amateur level of cabinetmaking competence. His explanations and asides are clear with a minimum of the folksiness that we have come to know and abhor in American popular technical writing. Dimensions are imperial.

In describing the construction of a piece, Mr. Watts uses the dressmaking pattern approach. For uninitiated readers, a dress pattern details the basic dress and then adds instructions for variations such as long or short sleeves, a high or flat collar, or an optional pleat. Similarly, a basic four-poster bed is shown with long or short posts, one piece or slatted headboard and an optional blanket rail.

Hence, so far I am quite impressed with Mr. Watts' book, but he falls down on the very thing which he stresses in his introduction, namely good design. His designs fall into two categories — Shaker (simple, light and elegant futniture made by a north-eastern religious sect) and post Second World War. In the former he is sound enough, but will persist in tapering legs on four sides instead of two. His own contemporary designs may be serviceable, but they are ill-proportioned, ungainly and crudely detailed. His furniture is slabby so that the casual observer would think that it was constructed from veneered chipboard — surely a doubtful virtue. To compound this fundamental defect he then splatters about enlarged wedged tenons, unsightly dovetails and meaningless cut-outs, perhaps in the mistaken belief that they imply craftsmanship. With constructional rather than decorative detailing Mr. Watts is much sounder, although turned legs and spindles have suddenly reduced ends resulting in unsightly shoulders where they enter seats or rails.

To summarize, a potentially excellent book which is marred by sloppy production and the all too common inclusion of poor aesthetic design. Mr. Watts does his potential followers a disservice by unknowingly encouraging them to add to the world's overlarge stock of ugly but well-made furniture.

Mike Darlow. Mike is a wood-turner working out of a Chippendale, NSW studio.

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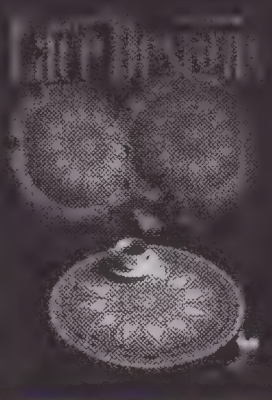

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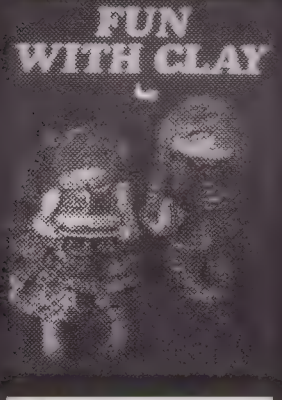

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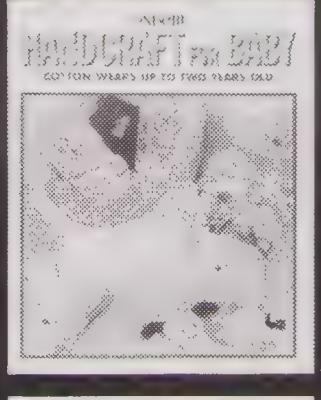

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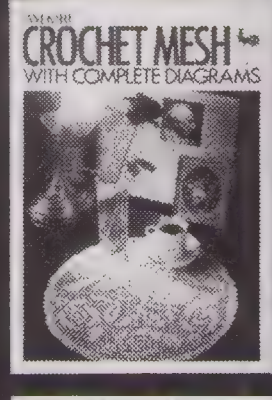

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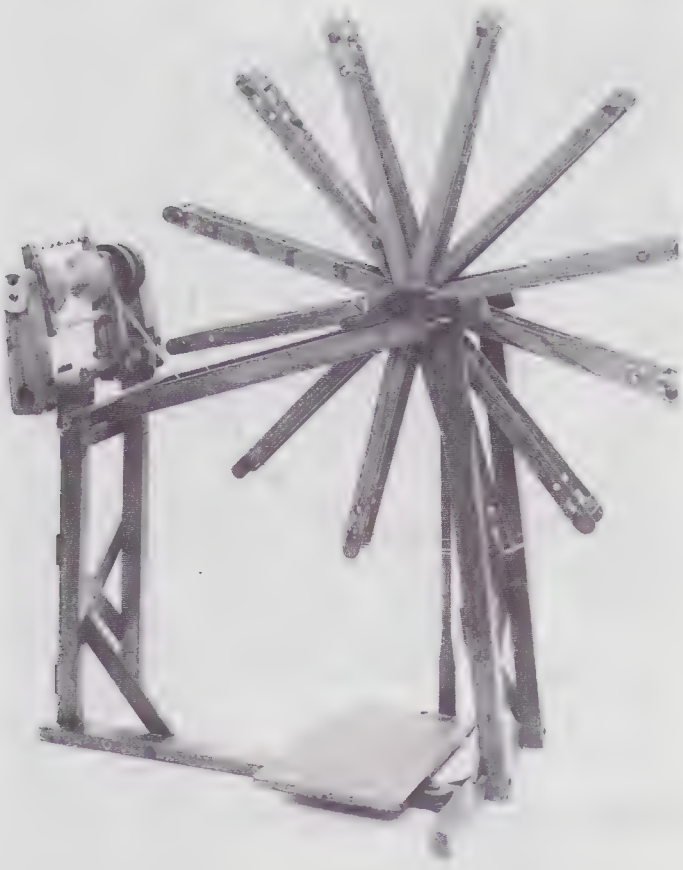

This Burnswick-style wheel is in the collections of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. While it is certain that it dates from the 1939-45 War Red Cross Rehabilitation Programs, its history and its designer are unknown.

This spinning wheel's most unusual feature is that it is collapsible. Even the wheel, which is made from double starts, held in a wheel configuration with a knotted cord, can fold into a flat shape.

The wheel is made from pine and has cedar whorls. There is a double driving band and the mother-of-all can be adjusted outward by swivelling on its base. Most of the wheel can be disassembled by unfastening wing-nuts and the footman is easily released from its axle. The assembly of the mother-of-all is unorthodox and changing bobbins is difficult.

The Australian War Memorial would like to ask anyone with information regarding this particular wheel or the use of spinning wheels for Red Cross rehabilitation to contact:

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BIZEN KILN AT DUNMOOCHIN, VICTORIA

Heja Chong

The first Japanese wood-fired climbing kiln built in a traditional Bizen style, using wholly traditional techniques and methods, has just been completed at Dunmoochin near Cottles Bridge in Victoria. The project was carried out by Heja Chong and supported by a grant from the Crafts Board of the Australia Council.

Heja spent 1982 in Japan working in the Bizen area studying the traditional methods characteristic of this celebrated school of pottery. After Heja worked under the master, Fujiwara Yu, she decided to build an authentic kiln near Melbourne to experiment with Australian materials using the methods of the oldest Japanese ceramic traditions. This tradition might be described as the most natural method of pottery making — no glazes used, the wood firing producing an ash glaze on the base surface revealing the natural beauties of the clay itself.

To build the kiln, Heja invited an established Bizen potter, Hidaru Shimamura to Australia. Heja and Hikaru have been helped in the work by a number of Victorian potters: Peter Knucky, Geoffrey Davidson, Trevor Clarke, Graeme Wilkie, Christopher Dunk, Rosalie Payne, Leslie Macleman, Sandy Caldow, Joanne Jepsen and others. The project took six weeks to complete. Some potters camped alongside the kiln for much of the time and one of the richest aspects of the project was this contact and exchange of ideas.

The kiln is ten metres long and two metres high with a six metre chimney. It contains four chambers (modern Bizen kilns usually have 4 or 5 chambers). It is built using Melbourne firebricks over a bamboo framework covered with mud, the kiln finely coated with another thick layer of mud mixed from local earth and straw. Firing the kiln using pine billets is done over a period of 10 days. Heja anticipates that the initial firing will be early this spring.

GALLERY PROFILE

BEAVER GALLERIES

A new special purpose building has been built for Beaver Galleries of Canberra. This is the first commercial gallery in Canberra and one of the very few in Australia built especially for exhibiting art, craft and sculpture. Located in the suburb of Deakin, a relatively central and well established area, it has a site that allows for considerable landscaping.

It comprises three interconnected galleries with an exhibition area of 400 square metres, including a large sculpture/woodcraft gallery that seats 80 to 100 people for occasional chamber music recitals and soirees. From the sculpture/woodcraft gallery, visitors will enter a sculpture garden designed for the display and enjoyment of large sculptures in all mediums.

The philosophy of the gallery is to present a wide spectrum of works by sculptors, painters and printmakers and works in the medium of glass, fibre, metal, clay, leather and wood. With the extensive wall and floor space, larger works can be displayed, allowing greater space around them giving the viewer uncluttered vision.

Major exhibitions are mounted each month in the exhibition gallery, at the same time the sculpture/woodcraft gallery and the crafts gallery displays a diverse selection of work. For the inaugural exhibition which opened in late September '84, all three galleries were used to display this exhibition, 'Excellence in Australian Art and Craft'.

The Directors have been involved in the art and craft scene in Canberra for many years and have watched the growth and recognition of this field of endeavour. Knowing that they are supported by artists and craftsmen, they have built this exciting centre for art and craft with confidence.

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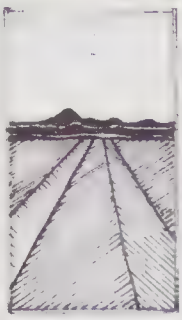

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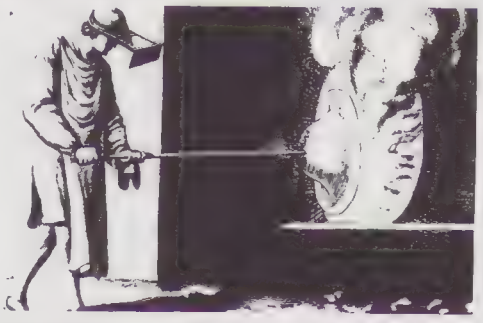
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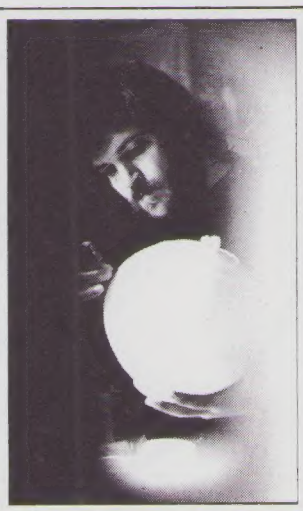

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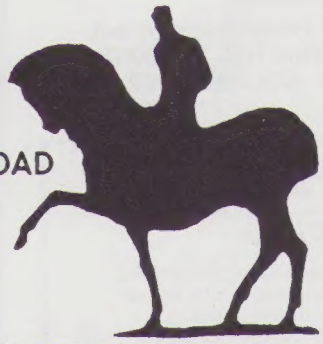

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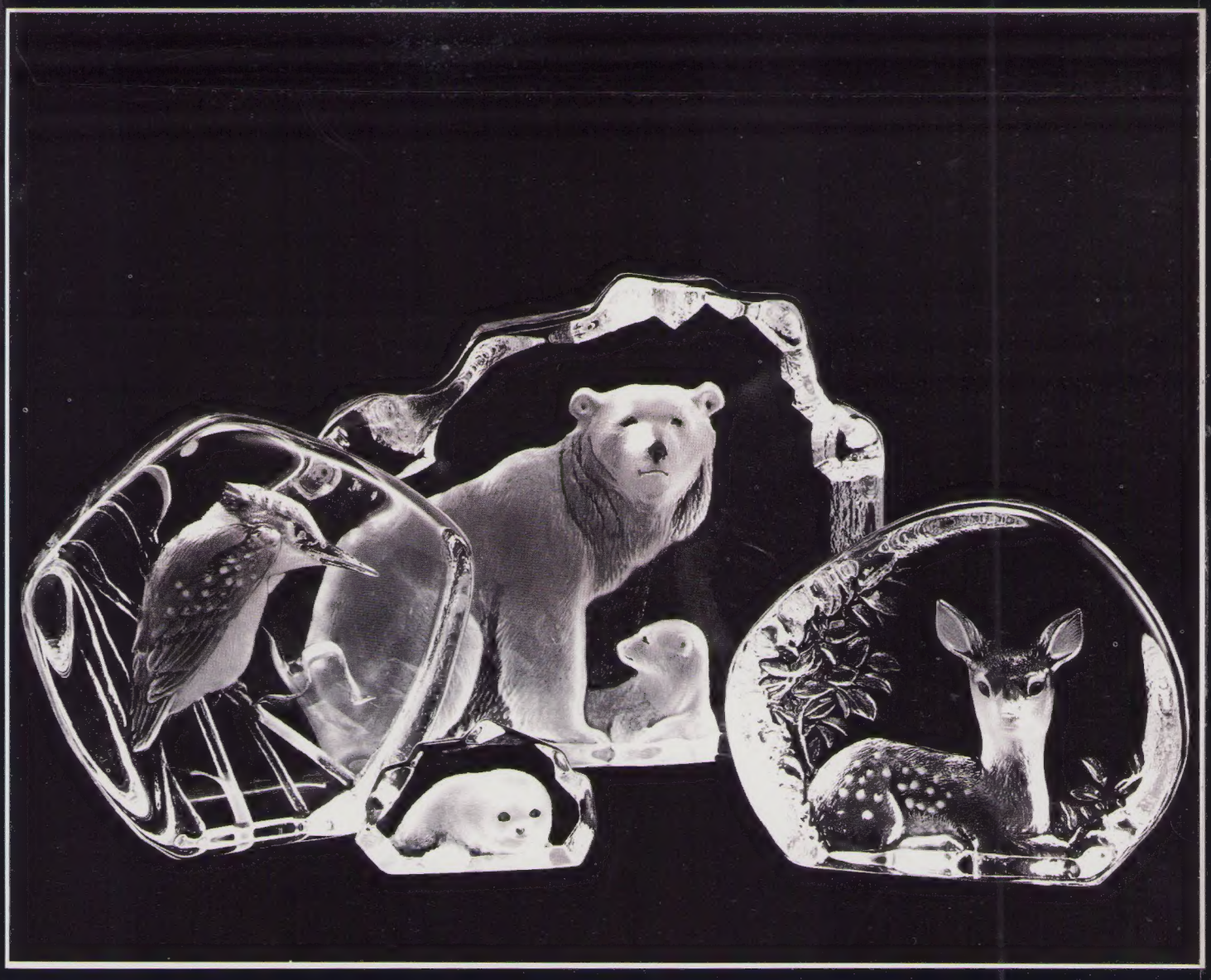

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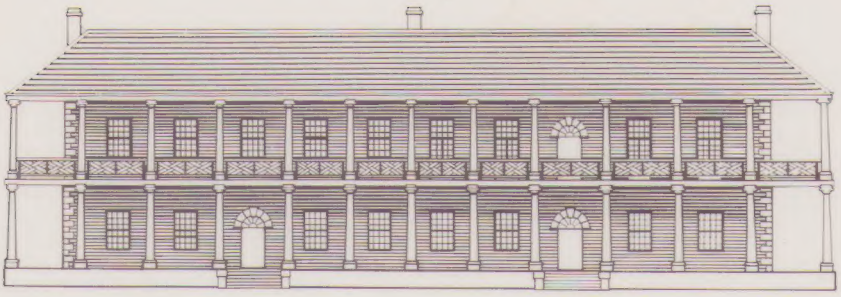

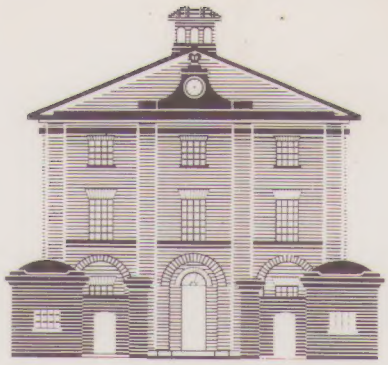

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